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EDNA DEAN BAKER

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THE LITTLE CHILD IN THE MIDST

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Kindergarten Method in the Church School

BY
EDNA DEAN BAKER
President of the National Kindergarten and Elementary College;
Member of the Faculty (Summer Session) of the
Department of Religious Education
Northwestern University

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

THERE are three relationships which Miss Edna Dean Baker holds and which suggest the importance and value of this book. As superintendent of the elementary division and having direct personal charge of the Beginners' Department of the church school of the First Methodist Episcopal Church at Evanston, Illinois, the superiority of Miss Baker's work is recognized by observers who come from all parts of our country. As president of the National Kindergarten and Elementary College, succeeding Elizabeth Harrison, Miss Baker stands in the foremost rank as a professional kindergartner. Either directly or indirectly, through graduates of the National Kindergarten and Elementary College, Miss Baker has maintained supervisory relationships to very successful week-day kindergartens conducted under church auspices.

And the reader's anticipations are fully realized when he begins to read these chapters. Whether it is a stenographic report of a conversation with the children, a study of individual differences among them, an analysis of instinctive behavior, or the art of praying with Beginners, the material is vividly suggestive of both sound principles and masterful technique. It has been said that Miss Baker can tell a story so skillfully that the children really smell the gingerbread and taste the honey. Perhaps it is this power that has made her so successful in picturing for teachers a wonderful Be-

ginners' Department in action, with the little children in their own inimitable way, learning to love God and his Son, Jesus Christ.

Teachers of Beginners in the church school, of little children in the public kindergarten, and of those who attend the week-day church kindergarten will find this book to be the work of a master in this field. Those who are familiar with the work of the Cradle Roll or Font Roll Department consider the term *Beginners' Department* a misnomer. In keeping with the best usage, the title of this book is *Kindergarten Method in the Church School*, though in deference to current phraseology, the term Beginners' Department is adopted in some places in the text.

NORMAN E. RICHARDSON.

PART I

THE CHILD

CHAPTER I

STUDYING THE CHILD

THERE are at least four essential factors in the making of any school, whether it be a church school or a day school, a mission school or a private school. There must be a child, a teacher, activities or subject matter, and the physical environment and equipment. The greatest of these is the child. "All teaching has two objectives," says George H. Betts in *How to Teach Religion*, "the subject taught and the person taught. Anyone of fair intelligence can master a given amount of subject matter and present it to a class, but it is a far more difficult thing to understand the child—to master the inner secrets of the mind, the heart, and the springs of action of the learner."

Difficulty in understanding.—It is especially difficult and especially important that the teacher of Beginners shall understand the child. The child of four or five is so different from the adult, not only in bodily structure and size but in ways of behaving, that he is a source of constant amusement, bewilderment, and irritation to the average grown-up. A little lad of four was riding on the train one day with his father. There were some three or four cars between the one in which they rode and the engine. Nevertheless, the boy leaning eagerly forward tugged at his father's sleeve, "Daddy, see the engine, come—see the engine!" The father obediently dropped his paper and looked ahead,

then turned reprovingly to his son: "You can't see the engine from here. There are cars in front of us." The father read his paper; the child still looked eagerly down the aisle. Again he addressed his father, "Oh, yes, daddy, but you can see the engine. There it goes puffing and blowing." This time father was not in a good humor at the interruption: "Look here, son, don't tell me that story about the engine again. You can't see it and I can't see it. There are too many cars ahead." The little lad waited a short time and then remarked with conviction, "Daddy, your eyes is different from mine." And they were. At this moment the four-year-old was using the eyes of the imagination; he was in the make-believe period of his existence when wishes are horses and beggars may ride. Father in his matter-of-fact world had no conception of the wonders that his son could see.

Danger in misunderstanding.—If the failure to understand the child ended in the discomfiture of the adult, the results would not be serious perhaps; but, unfortunately, lack of understanding means lack of opportunity for the child. He does not get what he needs when he needs it. The development which this stage of growth demands is imperfectly provided, and the loss sustained by the child cannot be made up to him later. A child had a defect of vision—one eye was out of focus. When attention was given at seven by an expert oculist, he said that three quarters of the vision of that eye had been forever lost because of delay in treatment, while if the case had been brought to him when the child was three, he could have prevented the loss in large part.

What is true of the physical development, which we can readily comprehend because the effects are objective, is quite as true of the mental and spiritual development where proof is less tangible. A man who is so self-conscious and timid that, in spite of a fine mentality, he continually cringes before his world, traces the beginning of this weakness to the years under six, when he was ridiculed and teased by the older children in the home and beaten from time to time by the father, who believed that to spare the rod was to spoil the child. For this particular child no worse punishment could have been found as far as educative results were concerned.

Religious needs.—In the field of religious training the highway is strewn with the mistakes made by well-intentioned adults who have had no conception of the nature and needs of the little child. "It is truer of the religious life than of any other," says one writer in referring to the period of early childhood, "that you can lead a horse to water but you cannot make him drink." John Kidder Rhodes, in an article in the Freeman, states the common experience of many brought up in Christian homes and churches, when he says that all his instruction on the subject of religion was bound up with a complicated heavenly hierarchy which effectually obscured the idea that religion could be a way of life instead of a preparation for death. "No one," he says, "had either the imagination or the desire to tell me that Jesus had been eager to go barefoot before the ground was warm enough or that he was probably curious to make whistles out of willow sticks or to swim on the Sabbath. It

would have been a revelation to have known that he was human and yet Godlike."[1]

The God who will appeal to the Beginner must be a God of love, a giving God, a God who protects and cares for this fearful, dependent, curious and acquisitive little being; a great Father-Mother God translated into terms of his experience. A God who resides in a distant heaven and from that vantage point spies on weak humanity and takes the wrongdoer unaware, arouses in this child only terror, distrust, and intense dislike. He forgets such a God in the bright daylight with family and friends all about; he fights off the thought of him as best he can when the darkness and isolation of the nursery at night confront him. Such a God does not function in his life, and to make God function in his life is the supreme task of the Beginner teacher. To reach her goal she has to work with the original stuff of human nature, with the desires, the interests, the physical and mental make-up of the four- or five-year old.

The individual child.—In order to understand the child it is necessary to study him, not only in books of child psychology and in the stories and poems where he has been immortalized, but every day and everywhere that he is to be met—on the playground, in the cars, at the corner grocery, on the front porch as well as in the schoolroom. Book learning concerning children, valuable as it is in giving the results of the observations and investigations of others, can never take the place of first-

[1] "A Footnote to Theology," by John Kidder Rhodes, in The Freeman, October 19, 1921. Reprinted by permission of B. W. Huebsch, publisher.

hand discovery. Without the latter, the former is futile, like the memorized recipes that often make such poor cooks.

In order to understand the individual child with whom the teacher is dealing, she must observe him, for he is not exactly like any other child who has ever been taught. While the experiences of others with children and her own previous teaching may furnish some guides, this child is like an uncharted sea. Observation to be scientific must be accurate in recording the history of the child and of the family, must include not only what the child said and did but the complete situation out of which this specific response came, and must give a sufficient number of similar responses on various occasions to warrant assertion as to that child's characteristics and needs. To say that a child is stubborn because he has behaved like a stubborn child on a single occasion is most unfair. He may be a very sweet-tempered, obedient child, who at this particular time is ill, fatigued, or pressed beyond his power of self-control by an unwise adult.

The observer.—The one who observes little children with success must first of all be sympathetic. Sympathy, often defined as the ability to put oneself in the place of another, presupposes a certain amount of understanding; and this the child is very quick to sense. A visitor in one of the mission kindergartens in a large city was greeted at the end of the morning with the remark, "Why don't you be a teacher?" and when questioned as to the reason for his comment, the small inquirer replied, "Because you'd make a nice one." This same visitor, who was, in fact, an earnest and able stu-

dent of childhood and its needs, was repeatedly accosted with similar comments, showing the instinctive response of little children to the sympathetic observer.

The observer must be more than sympathetic; she must be open-minded and impersonal in her point of view. Preconceived ideas about the capacities, the interests, or the shortcomings of the child frequently blind the student or teacher to his real possibilities and cloud all the evidence of observation, just as a similar bias in favor of certain devices in teaching may close the eyes to a superior technique. Concentration, or, as Doctor Dewey names it, single-mindedness is another essential; the one whose attention is divided between the child, the neighboring observer, and a new dinner gown will never make a satisfactory interpretation, because the observation cannot fail to be disconnected and more or less inaccurate. No characteristic tlised is more important, however, than reverence, first for the child's personality and then for the various manifestations of that personality including his utterances. The child is not a toy or a plaything, not a continuous performance for the entertainment of his elders. He is a living, growing self that merits respect and desires the confidence of older people quite as much as does the adolescent or the grown-up.

The fact that he is in a different stage of development is no reason for concluding that it is a less desirable or respectable stage. The laughter and ridicule of well-intentioned adults, as well as scolding and chastising, have served to stifle true expression in little children and to hinder growth. No

little child gives his deeper confidences or asks his unanswerable questions of the teacher who treats them as a joke and smiles with amusement as she gives a light reply. One day four-year-old Max walked in the great pine forests of the West with his teacher. As they sat down to rest he ventured, "Miss Mary, is God as big as our barn?"

Without the flicker of a smile, she replied in all seriousness, "Yes, even bigger I think, Max."

"Well, then," from Max after a moment, "is God as big as that great big tree?" pointing to a pine that rose one hundred and fifty feet toward the sky.

"Yes, much larger. God made the pine tree!"

After a few minutes of silence, Max ventured with awe in his voice, "He must be as big as the world!"

"He made everything in the world," said the teacher, and Max listened and learned that day more of the greatness and goodness of God than he had ever known before.

What to observe.—In order to help in the field of religious training we need to observe with the greatest care those acts, words, and expressions of the little child that indicate his thoughts, his purposes, his feelings concerning God and his creation. As teachers of Beginners it is our privilege and responsibility often to make the first contacts between the child and his God. We seek to establish the right relationship with God, with his fellows, and with the world of nature. We can know whether we succeed or fail only as we get indication from the child's behavior.

It is never safe to assume that the child under-

stands what we say to him, follows the story that we tell with true interpretation, or finds a message in the song, unless his conduct later verifies that supposition. Jane went home from Sunday school and sang jubilantly, "Jesus is sneaking in Humboldt Park." After inquiring of the Sunday-school teacher, the puzzled parent gained the true context of the song, which ran, "Jesus is seeking the humble heart." Those beautiful words had no meaning for Jane and hence the mistake.

How John behaves at table when company calls or when he plays with other children is important, but it is still more important to determine whether or not he has an ideal of how he ought to behave under these circumstances. Four-year-old Ellsworth on the occasion of his first appearance at Sunday school struck some of the other children in the face. When confronted by the teacher and the group he was plainly unaware that he had been at fault, and as soon as he understood the social standard he never again offended. Five-year-old Charles, on the other hand, when the Sunday-school teacher ate dinner at his house, drank from his fruit cup, used his fingers instead of fork and knife, and otherwise broke the laws of good breeding. Suddenly looking keenly at the teacher he said, "What do you think of the way I eat?"

Does Mary form purposes of her own? How long do they hold her interest? Does she ever carry them out? Bobby at a party ate his cookie, which was in the form of a rabbit, and then begged for another to take home to his mother. A second cookie was given him. He let it remain on the table for some time beside his plate while the light of his purpose

shone in his eyes, but little by little the recall of the taste of the first cookie broke down that purpose until at last he took a surreptitious nibble and was in a fair way to take another and another when the teacher reminded him of the purpose, and he willingly put the cookie in a safe place for keeping until he went home.

What does this little child care for most? His response will certainly tell you as it did in the case of the little child described by Mrs. Mumford,[1] whose first spontaneous prayer came when she received a paint-box: "Please, thank you, God, for putting it into my father's head to give me that paint-box, and thank the people who sold it to him, and thank the people who made it, and thank everybody." What does the child think God is like and what is the feeling toward him? Both questions were answered by Elizabeth when she said one day with not the slightest evidence of irreverence but in a fervent tone, "Oh, mother, I wish that I could go right up to heaven and climb in bed with God. I would kiss him like I did Daddy this morning."

All of these questions and many others of pertinence to the earnest teacher can be answered as she observes each individual child in her group, not only in the Sunday situation, but in the home, at the party, out-of-doors, wherever they may chance to meet. If she is deeply desirous of helping she will make these occasions as numerous as possible.

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[1] From *The Dawn of Religion in the Mind of the Child*, by Edith E. Read Mumford. Reprinted by permission of Longmans, Green & Company, publishers.

For further discussion:

1. Why is the child the most important factor in the church school program? Has he always been so considered?
2. Illustrate the loss to the child who is misunderstood physically or mentally.
3. Was the religious training of the past highly successful? Give reasons for your answer.
4. What preparation do you think the teacher of religion to little children should have?
5. List the qualities that the observer should cultivate.
6. How can the teacher of Beginners know whether or not she is succeeding?

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Kirkpatrick, Edwin A, *The Fundamentals of Child Study*, Chapters I and III. The Macmillan Company, 1903.

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Stern, William, *Psychology of Childhood*. Henry Holt and Company, 1924.

CHAPTER II

THE PHYSICAL FOUNDATION

The little child under six makes his fastest and most fundamental growth. At birth he weighs as an average seven pounds; at six, about fifty. This growth is partly due to inheritance, as little children with the poorest environment from the health standpoint still grow. But in a large measure growth is conditioned by environment. The church-school teacher is responsible for the proper conditions of air, sunshine, and exercise while the children are under her care, and she is also responsible to see that parents understand physical needs, and that they supply in the home not only these conditions but right diet, sleep, and clothing.

Careful statistics have shown that one third of all the deaths of the country occur in the years under six. It has also been proved in several surveys of child-welfare organizations that most of the physical defects encountered later have their origin in these years. Religious health at four or five cannot be separated from physical health, since we rarely find happy, helpful children with weak, sickly bodies either at this time in life or later. The church school, therefore, should cooperate in every way possible with the public-health program, and especially at this most important period.

Rapid growth of brain.—In order to cooperate it is necessary for the Beginner teacher to understand

fully the physical nature of the child she is teaching and the demands of that nature. The dominant physiological characteristics with their implications on training must be well known. There is rapid growth of the brain mass which is not full grown until nine or ten. This fact means that the mental processes of the child of four or five must be immature. Failure to understand at this point has often caused teachers and parents to require of this little child work that he could not do, with the result that he has suffered physically from the discouragement, the disapproval, and in many instances the physical punishments that have followed his inability to perform.

A certain teacher one day asked a child of five to draw "something suggestive of spring." He did not comprehend this abstract statement in the first place, and in the second he lacked clear mental imagery connected with spring. He failed to draw anything suggestive of spring, was kept in for an hour at noon, cried until he was hysterical, could eat no lunch when he finally reached home, and was unable to take his afternoon nap. The effect upon his health can readily be comprehended, entirely due to the fact that the teacher did not understand the immature brain with which she was dealing.

Fundamental muscular coordinations.—There is during these years rapid development of the fundamental muscular coordinations. The large muscles of the trunk, legs, and arms need constant exercise, while the accessory muscles should not be called upon so frequently. For this reason the kindergarten has eliminated the exceedingly fine sewing, pricking, weaving, folding, and block building, and

has substituted large floor blocks and large handwork materials. The Beginner teacher must also keep this fact in mind in her selection of handwork for the church school.

While muscular coordinations are rapidly forming, the child at this age has far from perfect control of his body. He is often awkward and clumsy in movement, knocking over chairs, striking vases off stands, spilling materials on the floor. The teacher must watch the expression of his face closely to determine whether these accidents are due to mischief or to lack of control. Misunderstandings at this point may occasion very unjust punishments.

Some of the rhythms which the modern Beginners' Department uses cannot be played by the child of four until he has had considerable practice. The skipping coordination, for instance, is late in developing in some children. They first lope along to the music of the piano, then skip with one foot and finally with both. Some children are very sensitive to their failure to perform perfectly and will want to drop out of the group, while others, if not rendered self-conscious by the criticism of the teacher, will take part happily to the extent of their ability. Little George told his mother after his first experience, "Mother, you know when we skip, one leg won't work."

Spontaneous motor reactions.—All stimuli tend to evoke spontaneous motor reactions. If a dog comes suddenly into the room, the adults sitting there may not move at all for a few minutes. They are busily thinking whether they will permit the dog to remain or will try to eject him, and in the latter event just how the job is to be done. If

there are children of Kindergarten age particularly in that room, they will not sit still. They may do any one of several things according to their previous experience or lack of experience with dogs—jump up and down, crying or screaming or laughing; run after the dog, grabbing him if they can; run out of the room in search of a safe hiding-place or a friend to help. In every instance unless the child is rigid with fear, there will be some spontaneous motor reaction.

The child does not have a large store of images and ideas to be aroused by stimuli nor at this age does he think subvocally; therefore every impression tends to find expression immediately in activity of voice, hands, or body. To suppress this activity is to injure seriously the growing child. He is learning through doing; this is nature's way of education. All that the teacher can safely do is to redirect the activity, to give it a safe discharge. Repression means an irritable, nervous child who finds mischievous or wrong ways of using his hands and who may develop in time habit-spasms of certain sets of muscles or chorea. In any case his health suffers from lack of proper exercise, and the functions of the body, so dependent upon activity, are not normally performed.

Teaching Beginners is an especially difficult art because of this very characteristic. The story is proceeding beautifully when some child spies a little bird on the window sill. He calls out instantly and every child is aroused. Before the teacher has time to catch her breath they are all at the window, talking to the little bird, trying to get the window up and their hands on him. Now he has flown to

the tree and they are shouting to attract his attention, and jumping up and down in their excitement. If the teacher is possessed of much patience and great tact, all may return to the story with renewed interest, or she may wisely put it away for another occasion and substitute one about birds.

Active sensory processes.—Closely related to this characteristic is another one: sensory processes are very active. Jessie Wilcox Smith's pictures of senses present in beautiful art form the hunger of the child to see, to hear, to touch, to taste, to smell. Now he watches with eager eyes the flight of birds across the sky; now he listens with delight to the patter of the rain upon the window pane; now he smooths with tender hands the velvet of his mother's gown; to-day he is tasting with ill-concealed approval his first strawberry; and to-morrow he will bury his small nose ecstatically in the June roses. Through these senses of his he is gathering vivid imagery with which to interpret stories and poetry, imagery that may make him some day a poet, an artist, a musician, an inventor. By means of these senses only can the world without ever be transferred to make the world within. He is learning through sensing; this is nature's way of unfolding the life within.

Kindergarten teachers must be chary of that prohibition, "Don't touch!" as of the other one, "Sit still!" The senses of sight and hearing have often been overstrained in the schoolroom while the other senses, particularly that of touch, have been neglected. Like Montessori, we need to plead for the use of every sense in education. Gesell tells us that tactility is the very essence of reality, that a

child may stroke a soft blanket with a delight so intense as to be almost spiritual.

The Kindergarten teacher will bring many living things into her room, many objects and pictures to gratify the sense hunger, and when they are there she will not hesitate to let the children test them. A little boy of five said to his teacher one Sunday when the children had crowded about her to look at some spring flowers, "You mustn't touch them, must you?" When she replied with perfect understanding of his longing, "Of course you can touch them, Bobby, and smell them too," he waited for no second invitation but took a tulip in his hand and softly felt all over it; then he smelled it for a full minute before putting it back in the vase. One little boy at least thanked the Lord with no uncertain gratitude for flowers that morning. Vivid imagery means vividness of thought, of feeling, of speech, of action later, and vivid imagery absolutely depends upon utilizing sense hunger during the years of childhood.

Sense organs easily strained.—The sense organs, especially the eye and ear, may be easily strained during these years and injured. The child should not be allowed to look long at a very bright light, and the direct sunlight should not be in his eyes as he faces the teacher or tries to look at a picture or some object. The sunlight must not fall upon the table where he is working. Little children are utterly unconscious of the conditions of light or shade under which they are working or playing, and it is altogether the teacher's responsibility to see that the room is properly lighted, neither too dark nor with bright sunlight on the face or materials. The

room must have artificial lighting for dark days and shades for the windows which can be drawn on bright days.

Too fine handwork is also a strain upon the eyes of young children, and this fact is a second reason for its elimination. The hearing of the child may not only be injured by colds and inflammations affecting the ears and throat, but also by the strain of trying to hear a teacher who speaks too softly or with imperfect enunciation. The strained look on the faces of little children sitting at some distance from the teacher is often pitiful. Even more cruel is the punishment which sometimes follows failure to hear and do correctly.

Pliable bony structure.—Rapid changes in growth are taking place in the cartilaginous portions of the bones, and the whole bony structure is pliable, so that malformations occur very easily. Certain deformities like curvature of the spine result from wrong posture, and malnutrition is responsible for such deformities as knock-knees and bowlegs. The teacher must see that the furniture which little children use is rightly designed to fit the body and that the child sits and stands properly. She must also help the mother to improve the diet of the child, so that he will be satisfactorily nourished.

Sanitation.—During these years the child is peculiarly susceptible to colds, digestional disturbances, and to contagions. He is acutely sensitive to pain and to decided variations in the normal temperature. Because of these facts every care must be taken to safeguard the physical conditions in which he lives. Direct sunlight should enter his nursery every day and also the room in the church

school or day school where he attends. There is no agency so powerful in killing germs as sunlight. The air of the room should be kept at a varying temperature of from sixty-five to seventy degrees Fahrenheit. There should be circulation of air and sufficient moisture. Particles of dust and dirt should be eliminated, as the delicate mucous membrane of the nose and throat may be seriously irritated so that disease results later on. Heating plants to-day are constructed to secure all of these desirable features of ventilation and heat. Air is cleaned, moistened, heated and properly circulated by them.

Diet.—Diet is of prime importance, and while the teacher, especially the church-school teacher, does not directly supply the child's food, she may through conferences with the mother and at parents' meetings advise and therefore indirectly be of the greatest influence. Diet affects glandular action and this in turn has a far larger bearing upon behavior than has been realized. The child who is nervous, irritable, quarrelsome is not infrequently the poorly nourished child. Malnutrition is not an ailment from which the children of the poor alone suffer; in fact, a large percentage of badly fed children come from the better class of homes and often from families of wealth.

All children of this age should have milk to drink and no tea, coffee, or other stimulants. Cereals, whole wheat breads, vegetables, and fruits with meat juices and very simple desserts should form the remainder of the menus. No fried foods, rich pastries, candies, pickles, or spiced foods should be used. Many children are allowed to "piece" be-

tween meals. This is a very bad practice. Children should have only water or fruit juices except at the stated intervals when food is regularly served.

In nurseries and kindergartens a lunch of milk and a wafer or orange juice and oil is often given in the middle of the morning and again in the afternoon. Water may be cool but should not be iced, and iced foods, especially in hot weather, are likely to prove dangerous, as it is difficult to get the little child to eat or drink slowly. Meal time should always be a particularly happy time, because good humor aids digestion; it is important therefore that the child enjoys his food and his companionship at table.

Sleep.—Sleep also is a very necessary factor if we wish to insure physical welfare. Experiments upon animals have shown that lack of sleep more seriously and profoundly affects the organism than lack of food for the same length of time. Puppies after ninety-six hours of enforced wakefulness have shown a forty per cent loss in weight. Work without rest or play without sleep means no opportunity for repairing the physical and chemical changes which take place during activity. In a child, sleep also makes possible the storing of "potential energy" and the forming of a surplus of matter which are necessary to normal growth.

Children from two to six need twelve hours of sleep each night, and should have in addition a nap and rest period in the afternoon. They should be in bed by seven o'clock in the evening and should have the nap at a regular time every afternoon. The depth of sleep as well as its duration is

important. Absence of fear at the bedtime hour, sufficient covering, a correct sleeping position, a light evening meal and a day that has not overstimulated—all of these are important in securing favorable sleep.

Children's parties, shopping tours, the movie, and other forms of adult entertainment are often pernicious not only in the influence upon the child's ideals and ideas of life, but also because they deprive him of sleep which is truly golden at this age. We must not, however, confound the need for sleep with the undesirable sluggishness of some children who tend to fall asleep at all hours of the day and whose laziness is often due to poor food, air, and lack of proper exercise or to some disease. Such children need the immediate examination of a reliable physician or nurse and treatment following their location of the cause for this inertia.

Contagions.—Children's contagions, of which whooping cough, measles, and scarlet fever are likely to be especially serious both in immediate and far-reaching effects, must be carefully avoided by rigorous inspection at home, in the kindergarten, and the church school. Children with coughs and colds, especially in the influenza stage, should be excluded, as these afflictions are not only contagious in themselves, but are often the forerunners of the more serious diseases. A child whose stomach is upset or who has a temperature should never remain with other children, as these conditions may indicate the beginning of a contagious disease. "Locking the barn door after the horse is stolen" is quite applicable to the teacher who attempts to fumigate for preventive purposes after she has al-

lowed a child to remain in school until he is thickly broken out with measles. Her efforts will do little good in safeguarding the remaining forty-nine children from the dread intruder.

Children who have been exposed must be watched carefully during the incubation period which varies somewhat for every contagion, and children who have the disease must be quarantined at home until a reliable physician permits them to return. Teachers and parents need enlightenment on the folly and the sin of letting children contract these contagions unnecessarily. We still meet individuals who seem to think that it is just as well for all the children in the family or the community to have whooping cough at one time and get over with it, but the Christian attitude demands the cooperation of all in stamping out these enemies of childhood as quickly and effectively as possible.

Health habits.—The Beginner teacher and the mother have not fully met their responsibility for the child when they have provided right environment and by so doing have taken preventive steps to ward off illness and to induce health. The child himself needs to be an active agent in the health program. He is not too young at four or five to have formed or to be forming several important health habits. The following brief list is suggestive of what should be attempted. The mother needs the help of the teacher, and the teacher must win the cooperation of the mother. The little child himself can understand the reason for and be interested in his own progress in forming these habits:

1. Comes to school and Sunday school clean.
2. Washes hands before eating.

3. Takes care of finger nails.
4. Uses tooth brush properly.
5. Bathes regularly.
6. Uses individual towel.
7. Wears proper clothing.
8. Uses toilet properly.
9. Washes hands after going to toilet.
10. Keeps fingers and materials away from mouth, nose, ears.
11. Uses handkerchief properly.
12. Covers mouth when sneezing or coughing.
13. Makes a proper use of drinking apparatus.
14. Eats only at meals.
15. Does not handle unnecessarily his own food or that of others.
16. Selects a suitable chair and sits in it correctly.
17. Plays a part of every day out of doors.
18. Avoids getting wet, wears rubbers, and removes damp clothing.

Mental hygiene.—The mental characteristics and their implications will be studied in a later chapter, but this exposition would not be complete without reference to the influence of mental attitudes and habits upon health. Into a certain home where there is a little boy of four there came a few months ago a new baby. Up to the hour of the baby's birth Tommy had been the center of attention; his every wish had been gratified and his word was law in the household. Since the arrival Tommy has been ignored by both parents, while the pivotal point in the family has shifted to the new baby; and Tommy, filled with jealousy and grief, has lost weight and developed a stutter.

It is most desirable that little children should

have good feelings and attitudes such as happiness, sympathy, kindness, confidence in self, and independence. The old type of religious training which put the emphasis upon an unnatural quiet and self-restraint, which inculcated morbid fears and suppressed the play life, did much to produce unhealthy, neurotic children. The new movement in religious education not only frees the mind of the little child from suspicion, fear, and superstition, but in so doing it makes possible a normal, wholesome physical growth.

For further discussion:

1. Why should the Kindergarten teacher be especially concerned about the physical welfare of the children in her department?
2. What physical characteristics of the child from four to six affect the actual teaching program?
3. What physical characteristics should be considered in planning the room in the church school?
4. What physical needs of the child must be met through the home and the parents?
5. Make a chart for the following children's contagions: whooping cough, measles, scarlet fever, diphtheria, mumps, chicken pox—showing length of incubation period, first symptoms, period of quarantine. Use reference books by Terman and Holt.

Diseases	L. of I. P.	F. S.	P. of Q.
Whooping-cough....			
Measles.....			
Etc.....			

6. From the list of health habits select ten that you think most necessary.

7. Do you consider mental hygiene as important as physical? Why?

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CHAPTER III

MENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

THERE are many teachers of Beginners who have very little appreciation of the mind of the child whom they are teaching. They do not stop to inquire how accurately he perceives or what objects attract his attention. They do not know the span of attention for any type of activity, the kind of memory, the way in which he thinks, the ideas that he can grasp, the intensity of his emotions, or the versatility of his imagination. In consequence they talk in language that is meaningless to him, tell stories that are three times too long to hold his attention, demand the memorization of Scripture texts, ask questions that he cannot possibly answer, stimulate his fears until he is unable to sleep at night, and call his imaginary tales naughty stories.

There is no other group in the church school which suffers so often or so much from lack of understanding of the mental ability as the Beginners, because there is no other group quite so far in development from the adult mind as this one. The amount of mental growth which takes place during the preschool period far exceeds anything which takes place in any later period. As Gesell points out, "the character of this mental growth is by no means purely or preeminently intellectual. Almost from the beginning it is social, emotional, moral, and it denotes the organization of a personality."

Discrimination.—The hunger of the senses and the value in the child's education of using all of them, especially the sense of touch, has been fully emphasized. Perception is dependent, not only upon the sensation of the moment, but also upon the ability to discriminate and the recall of past experiences at the time of perceiving. The Kindergarten child has more power of discrimination than has the little child under four and he also has a larger store of past experiences with which to compare. Perception during this period is most important and the teacher can facilitate it by furnishing variety and richness of sensation and by stimulating discrimination.

Every Sunday morning there should be flowers or a growing plant in the room. If the children do not spontaneously notice them, the teacher calls attention and gives opportunity to note the color, to feel the texture, to smell the odor. At the same time other flowers are recalled and compared with these as to color and odor. The children like to try to name the new flowers. Too many varieties should not be used, and there should be frequent repetition during the season of a certain few so that the percepts will be clear and definite. Of course back of this little exercise lies another motive: the child's appreciation of flowers grows upon the basis of his contact with them as our appreciation of pictures increases as we become acquainted with them, as we compare one with another and make definite discrimination. Every added beauty inspires greater wonder for and gratitude to their Creator.

The child continually sees more detail as his

drawings and efforts at expression in speech verify. Language greatly aids clear discrimination; adjectives and adverbs are being added to vocabulary daily as well as nouns and verbs. He speaks of the red rose, the sour orange, and the very high wall. One five-year-old said that he went with his father to an enormous museum. When asked by the children what he meant by "enormous," he replied without hesitation, "Why very large, of course."

Concept making.—When the child first begins to form concepts or ideas he makes many amusing mistakes because of his limited experience and his slight power of discrimination. Sammy, aged three, was walking down the street one day with some older children when he saw a Saint Bernard dog approaching. In a doubtful tone Sammie queried, "Moo-moo cow?" The children laughed hilariously, whereupon Sam with much dignity and with an injured note in his voice, asserted, "No, no. Bow-wow dog!" Four-footed animals of the size of that dog he had been accustomed to classify as cow, hence the mistake.

The Kindergarten child is aided in the development of concepts by the increase in his vocabulary, and he is not only gaining ideas through direct contact with people and things but also through stories and questions. His definitions are almost always according to use; a fork is to eat with, a chair is to sit on, a pencil is to write with. He understands in terms of his daily experience: for instance, one small boy asked if heaven had paper or calcimine on the walls. This same child insisted, in repeating the Lord's Prayer, on substituting "gravy bread" for "daily bread," "give

us our best dresses" for "forgive us our trespasses," and "mailman" for "amen," because the substitution had meaning for him and the original none.

Symbolism is not comprehended: a flag is a flag, and not the symbol of our country; a cross is a cross, and not the symbol of sacrifice; a circle, a circle and not the symbol of unity. He has no conception of distance except as things are within reach. He will tell you that he went a mile when he has just walked a block. Time is also very vague except as it is connected with some experience that stands out, as lunch time or bedtime. He often queries "When is to-morrow?" or "How soon will it be next Christmas?" and he will tell you that his birthday is next week, when it is two months away.

Number beyond counting objects to ten or twelve is also vague. He will assert without blush that he saw a million birds or that he has a hundred trains. What ideas of right and wrong he possesses are the result of experience: that which works is right; that which fails is wrong. Hence it may be right to pick flowers in the neighbors' gardens and very wrong to wiggle in church, because his parents have punished for the latter and winked at the former offense.

Interest and attention.—The Kindergarten child can listen to short statements and requests in language that he can understand. He can heed and carry out one, two, and sometimes three commissions, as "Close the door," "Put the pencil away," and "Bring the waste-paper basket." If absorbed in a story, he may listen for five and even ten minutes without wavering in attention; and he will work on

some manual project, like building a house of blocks, for a much longer time, for thirty or more minutes, with sustained interest. His attention, however, is very easily distracted and tends to be fleeting, for he lacks voluntary control. A whistle sounds outside and he runs to the window to see the balloon man; he has barely watched this man out of sight when a visitor at the door claims his attention or a picture on the wall catches his eye.

One secret of holding his attention lies in eliminating as many trivial and uneducative distractions as possible. In many church schools Beginners, Primary children and Cradle-Roll little ones are all in the same room although a different teacher may be handling each group. Such an arrangement means a constant diverting of attention, especially on the part of the two younger groups. Noises in the street, interruptions at the door of the room, visitors who whisper—all these add their quota of disturbance. To be attentive a little child must be interested; subject matter and activities should be selected with a view to that which he can understand and which has compelling charm. Very few children can resist the fascination of rhythmic movement, of the story and the song correctly adapted to the age need. The teacher herself may be a distraction if she is nervous, noisy, or possesses a disagreeable voice. She must cultivate simple language, a pleasing voice, and quiet poise. She must learn too to follow the lead of the children on occasion, but she must be able to bring them back to complete what they have begun.

Memory.—The memory of the four- or five-year-old is not very dependable. His mental grasp is

limited. At four his sentences contain seven or eight words and at five perhaps twice the number. He needs short stories with few characters, poems or songs of not more than one or two stanzas, and errands which necessitate filling only two or three requests at most. He remembers those things which have created a deep impression by reason of their novelty, the degree of satisfaction which they gave, or the pain which they caused.

One child now grown says that the first thing which she clearly remembers was picking dandelions one spring morning when the yard was dotted gold; she can see yet the little white glass slipper in which she placed them for her mother. Another young woman tells of a party where she drew from a pond a whistle and the little boy next to her a doll. She remembers her bitter indignation at the aunt who forcibly separated her from the whistle, which was presented to the little boy, while the doll was placed in her unwilling arms. Rote memory is not especially strong at this time and logical memory is seldom apparent. The teacher commits a mistake, therefore, when she emphasizes the learning of Scripture texts or other memory material, and also when she demands that the child repeat for her or the group the lesson story of the week before. If the picture illustrating the story is shown, he will often recall spontaneously the points of greatest interest or will join in as the teacher retells the story, giving favorite bits here and there.

Problem solving.—If an obstacle is presented to the course of free activity, the child is immediately challenged to solve a problem. The amount of thinking which he does is comparatively little be-

cause he has limited experience on which to draw for suggestion, and he acts impulsively. He uses the "trial-and-error" method and learns by experience what works and what doesn't work, depending upon the satisfaction that he derives. He often does his thinking aloud, as did the small boy who experimented with a victrola. "First you wind it," he said, suiting the action to the word, "and then you start it," and after a little hesitation, "and then you put the needle on." Each time the thought was accompanied by action and he beamed with pleasure when the record began to be heard.

The teacher can help the child to develop the ability to think by setting problems for him. "How do you think the shepherd got the little lamb out of the hole?" "How do we know that it is spring?" "What shall we do when everybody talks at once?" are types of questions which present a real obstacle and yet are sufficiently close to the child's experience for him to think of a reasonable answer. When the teacher sets a problem or the child finds one, she must be careful to give him time to find a way out and to help him enough so that he will not grow discouraged. Simply suggesting a choice of two or three ways of doing a thing stimulates some thinking and calls for a decision on the child's part. The teacher who never presents any problems, or solves them all herself, falls short of a great opportunity to secure initiative and purpose in the child.

Imagination.—Perhaps the outstanding characteristic of this child is the quality of his imagination. He is in the "make-believe" stage of existence where he relates images as he wishes with no regard for the facts. He narrates a thrilling

tale about a fire on the next street which he attended; he tells how he chopped open the door, helped the firemen put out the flames and rescued a baby. When carefully questioned on every detail he may or he may not admit that he only watched the fire standing at a safe distance with father and wished that he was a fireman. His wish was so strong that an hour or two later he was sure that the incident really took place as he related it. He does not yet appreciate or understand natural law, so people can fly through the air, tigers can live in the water, donkeys can talk, and he himself can do any marvelous thing that was ever known on land or sea or in the air. He should have the pleasure of making up these fanciful tales, for he may be an artist in embryo; but he must learn to distinguish between a dependable account of what really took place and these delightful stories of the impossible.

The teacher can develop accuracy by going over with the children afterward the experiences that have brought great pleasure, checking mistakes by going back to look again or by hearing the tale repeated or by touching with the hands. The child should be held to strict account who purposefully tells an untruth in order to secure a reward. The child who states that he hasn't had a cookie when he has just eaten two should be watched carefully and never permitted to gain a third cookie by this means. He should also be expected to act truthfully and dependably in carrying out whatever is asked of him.

Emotions intense.—The emotions of the Beginner are intense. Sometimes they seem to be very

transitory and again they persist long after we think they have passed away. Terman tells us that the disappointments, the humiliations, the griefs of the little child are the most real there are.

Of all the negative emotions none is more often stimulated by the unwise parent or teacher than fear. The child is told that the policeman will lock him up if he doesn't behave, that the doctor will give him something he will not like if he eats the candy, that the boogy-man will catch him if he runs away, and, worse still, that God does not like bad little boys and punishes them. The shadows of childish fears haunt grown men and women. The story is told of a man who shivered with fear as the cold of winter came on; he had no need to dread, for there were plenty of physical comforts in his life, but his intellect battled in vain with the emotion. Finally a psychiatrist discovered the source of that fear; it lay far back in his childhood when a lad in Russia he and his loved ones were driven into a barn for shelter in the bitter cold, and there he saw all of his family slain while he alone was rescued. The fear that he suffered on that occasion the cold has always renewed.

Jealousy is another negative emotion from which children suffer. One of the frequent stimuli is the advent of a new baby in the home. The child who has heretofore had all the attention is now neglected. Little Betty told her teacher one Sunday about the new baby that mother had at the hospital; there was evident happiness in her voice and manner. The next Sunday mother had returned from the hospital with the baby, but when the

teacher inquired of Betty about the baby, Betty was strangely silent. A few minutes later she crept up to the teacher and with a most pathetic note in her voice she said, "I's a baby!" Fortunately, that teacher understood the situation and soon had Betty anticipating all the fun that she and the baby were to have together and all the care that the baby would need from big sister.

Anger is very evident in the young child, and frequent fits of rage are not uncommon among children of four and five. Unnecessary causes of anger should be eliminated. A frequent one is the forcible interference with the child's activity. Often children are seized by the stronger adult or their playthings are snatched away from them. Of course there are occasions when a willful child for his own safety or that of others has to be stopped by physical means; but whenever possible he should not be touched but should be helped by rational treatment to act himself in the desired way. It is unwise for the adult to run after a child, as it is usually much more effective and infinitely better to stand in one place and in a firm, quiet tone call until obeyed. The average four- or five-year-old will heed the latter and disregard the former method of control.

Teasing little children by laughing at them or taunting them is very wrong, as they are either enraged or intimidated by such treatment. The child who becomes angry should be left alone without argument or persuasion until his temper is cool again, and then a little quiet talk, using disapproval and showing him that he only loses by such exhibitions, will go far toward engendering self-control

the next time. Never let him win his point by such explosions, or he will be sure to repeat later. The positive emotions of love, sympathy, happiness are very necessary to physical and mental health and normal growth. They can be stimulated by patience, kindness, fair treatment, and affection, and by giving the little child a chance to help others with the joy of appreciation when he does.

Suggestibility and credulity.—The Kindergarten child is very suggestible and credulous. A visitor to a Beginners' Department called the children "nice little kiddies." A few seconds later there were at least twenty children on all fours mewing loudly. They had mistaken "kiddies" for "kitties" and suited the action to the word. They are so sensitive to atmosphere that a critical adult will provoke every variety of naughtiness in an otherwise docile group. They are full of questions and believe every answer that is given, even to the absurdity that stars are daisies and the moon made of green cheese. The will is impulsive, and so suggestion and belief are followed forthwith by action. It is therefore very dangerous to tell children anything but the truth and sometimes most unwise to tell all the truth.

The teacher must consider carefully what may be the result of the suggestions which she is giving, of the facts which she is stating. The story of the crucifixion of Jesus told with all the sad and harrowing details will arouse in most Beginners intense fear and grief, and may even prejudice against the Christ. It will certainly stir bitter hatred and anger against those who killed him. Some children have transferred that intense dislike to all Jews,

even Jewish children, and have retaliated by fighting with them on all occasions. On the other hand, the suggestibility and credulity of this child give almost unlimited opportunity to stimulate positive feelings and attitudes and to teach right ideas.

For further discussion:

1. Give one good illustration from your own observation of the mistakes due to a failure to understand mental development in the Beginner.
2. Is there any justification for the boy of five who exclaims after hearing the teacher tell of a man with two automobiles, "Ah, my father has a hundred automobiles!"
3. Describe one sense play or game which will aid discrimination.
4. Analyze your earliest memory as a child and tell what gave the incident such power of impression.
5. Under what circumstances should a Beginner be held to strict accountability in the statements he makes? Why?
6. Make a list of the distractions which may divert the attention of the children in the Beginners' Department.
7. How would you forestall jealousy on the part of the child who has a new little brother or sister?
8. What characteristics of the child make him particularly impressionable during these years?
9. How may a teacher stimulate problem solving?

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CHAPTER IV

INSTINCTIVE BEHAVIOR

The child is not only a product of environment but perhaps fifty per cent or more of inheritance. Both are of great importance in shaping his destiny so there need be no quarrel as to which tips the scales the heavier. Inheritance does not mean merely the family traits manifested in the offspring but also that dim ancestry dating back to the beginning of time, from which we have all sprung, our common inheritance. This inheritance is usually described in terms of reflexes, instincts, tendencies, capacities. Reflexes, according to Thorndike, are the most definite and uniform responses to the simplest situations, and modification is very difficult—swallowing, breathing, winking the eye, the kneejerk are illustrative.

Instincts are less definite responses to more complex situations and modification is much more possible. Fear, fighting, and nurture are all instincts that show a variety of response attached to many different situations, and much modification may therefore take place. Capacities and tendencies are very indefinite responses or sets of responses to very complex situations and normally require much training before full development takes place, as, for instance, talent in music or art. As there is no abrupt transition from reflex to instinct to capacity but a gradual shading, for practical purposes, mani-

festation of the common inheritance is called instinctive behavior.

An interactive process.—The child comes into the world with this instinctive equipment but it is implicit until the world without stimulates the response of the organism. The reflexes begin to function first, and then in the months and years that follow one by one instincts, tendencies, capacities appear as the organism develops and environment or training plays its part. Education is therefore an interactive process. Some of the instinctive equipment needs elimination, as, for example, cruelty, greed, and insane rage; some needs modification and redirection, such as fighting, fear, and other individualistic responses; while still others, like nurture, should be perpetuated.

Elimination occurs when all stimuli are withheld so that the instinct disappears through not being used, or when dissatisfaction takes place when it is used. If, for instance, each time the child goes into a violent rage he is isolated from the family and if that isolation causes real discomfort, he will gradually cease such exhibitions of anger. Perpetuation takes place when stimuli are supplied which arouse response and when satisfaction is attached to the action. If a little child has a doll or a pet to care for at the age when nurture appears, then there will be a constant stimulus to its exercise, and as the exercise, of itself, tends to bring satisfaction, perpetuation occurs.

Redirection or modification takes place when another response is substituted for the undesirable one or when the undesirable response is attached to a new situation where it is perhaps helpful in-

stead of harmful. If the little boy who insists on punching his sister can transfer his response to a punching bag, the results will be altogether desirable; and if the child who turns white with terror and screams when she sees a dog approaching can learn to feed the dog instead, a gratifying substitution will have taken place.

It is not possible to discuss all the instinctive behavior of the Beginner child here, but merely to treat such selected instincts and tendencies as are dominant in these years and have direct bearing upon the religious education of the child.

Fear.—Fear is one of the most evident of the instincts during these early years. The fear response attaches itself to many situations and often occurs where nothing indicates that experience could have taught fear. The explanation is that in the history of the race similar situations have inspired fear wisely for the preservation of the organism and that these fears still persist as a part of the inheritance of the child of to-day. Such typical fears are the fear of strangers, of thunder, of loud noises, of swiftly moving objects, of darkness, of animals.

Children vary greatly in manifesting these fears: some children show one, others apparently fear nothing, and still others are a prey to several. The time of day, who is present, the lighting of the room, and many other differences in attending circumstances will influence the fear response. For instance, a child may run in terror if he meets a big dog when he is on a lonely street but show little evidence of fear when the dog enters his yard where he is playing with his father. Another child will show no fear of any dog in the daytime but

will shrink if one comes near in the darkness. The attitude and action of other people, including other children, can help or hinder the fear response in the first place or later. If when the child first hears thunder and shows signs of terror the parent laughs as if the noise were a pleasant surprise, explaining simply the phenomena, the child may also laugh and clap his hands the next time he hears that sound. On the other hand, if the parent shrink by ever so little, yielding himself to the feeling of fear, the impressionable child will catch his reaction and fear will be intensified. Many a child has carried through life a fear that in the first place was suggested to him by his father or mother. In an effort to teach a child proper caution fear is often engendered. The greatest care must be taken to eliminate dread from voice or manner when children are being taught the reasons for safety precautions.

In addition to the fears already described there are certain imaginary fears which are the result of teaching, such as the fear of witches, of goblins, of giants, of dragons, of the boogy-man. There are also the superstitions which every primitive people have taught their children, and many of which are instilled at the present time, such as the fear of bad luck on Friday. These imaginary fears as a rule do not persist after the eighth or ninth year when reason convinces the child of their lack of reality; but before that time they may cause great suffering.

A sensitive little child, having read Grimm's *Fairy Tales*, transformed a certain crabbed old woman who lived between her home and the school

house into a veritable Grimm witch. The poor child used to go blocks out of her way in order to avoid passing the cabin of the old woman, who in her imagination was ever watching to seize defenseless children. This little girl never told anybody about her fear until several years later and endured silently until the time when she came to understand that witches are only figments of the imagination.

The fear of God, who, in his wrath, hurls the thunderbolt of punishment against the helpless mortal, is of all fears the one that has worked the greatest ill to hapless childhood. With this has been coupled the horror of Satan, the evil one, who holds all bad people in his dark abode after death and never ceases to torment them. However much the fear of God and of Satan may have affected the adult sinner and turned him from his evil way, it has only danger for the little child. It separates him from the love of God, the Father, who cherishes at all times with tenderness this helpless, fearsome, unmoral little one, who needs not to dread the anger of God but to confide in his loving care.

Children do not understand figurative language. They accept literally every statement that is made. John Kidder Rhodes tells of hearing from an austere aunt the words of Scripture, "Curse the Lord thy God and die." Immediately there fell upon him a great temptation to try cursing in order to see what would happen, but with the desire there was also a great terror lest at the first word he fall dead. Writing as a man, he says, "The long shadow of that nightly temptation lies across my later years." Because of the statements in the Bible which the

child interprets literally and which unnecessarily separate him from his God, all Bible stories and verses should be carefully selected and every statement eliminated that might have this unfortunate effect.

Other fears that children are heir to are those that result from fright due to accident or to the intentional deception of older people. Bobbie is told that the conductor will throw him out of the window of the train if he doesn't sit still, and Mary is informed that her hands will be cut off if she doesn't stop squeezing the baby. An automobile accident, a wreck on a train, a severe storm in which people were injured, are typical of the incidents which may result in prolonged and repeated fears on the child's part. Because the years of four and five are more full of fear than those which come later, for the reason that the child is very emotional, very sensitive to atmosphere, very limited in experience and therefore unable to understand his fears, it is most important that the Beginner teacher handle the problem with sympathy and wisdom.

Patience and love, also, are absolutely necessary; it takes time as well as gentle treatment to overcome fear. The child who is forced or harshly reprimanded as a rule becomes that much more set, although firmness in dealing with a timid child is often just what he needs. The fear of strangers is one of the most difficult which the teacher has to meet. A small boy one Sunday morning was crying softly with his head buried in his mother's dress; he couldn't even look at the forty gay little children who filled the room. The grandmother was stand-

ing by the mother, and both were scolding the child violently for his naughtiness. The scolding brought forth a tempestuous sobbing instead of the suppressed weeping. Whereupon the mother turned to the teacher, who stood near, also a complete stranger to the child, and said: "Miss S— will take you and lock you up in a dark closet. Here, take him, Miss S—." At these words the child began to scream, and finally had to be carried out of the church.

How much wiser the mother and teacher who work carefully together! When the child first shows fear, they lead him into an adjoining room or to a quiet corner of the Beginner room and find for him a familiar or an interesting occupation, such as looking at pictures or playing in the sand. Mother remains for the first few Sundays until the child is acquainted with the teacher, and the teacher tries to hasten that acquaintance by visiting in the home.

It is well to eliminate fear if that can be done by showing him that it is groundless, as is the case when a child is afraid to touch a rabbit or a chicken. If other people touch with impunity and seem to get pleasure from the contact, the child will soon try. Fears that cannot be entirely eliminated may often be changed to a cautious attitude; for instance, when the child is in terror of the cars in crossing the street, as he is shown how they stand perfectly still when the policeman blows the whistle, he will learn to wait quietly until that moment and then cross with the necessary caution. Sometimes it is best to remove the child from a situation which causes fear until he is able to reason, such as going down in an elevator or meeting a big black dog.

If, when a child is fearful, his attention can be diverted from the stimulus that is causing the fear, his response may change instantly. Betty was crying in the dark when she suddenly felt her beloved pussy rubbing against her knee. Instantly pussy was the center of interest and Betty dried her tears and talked comfortingly to the cat.

As the child gains confidence in his own powers, and if early a faith in God's care can be developed, these attitudes will assist wonderfully in helping him to overcome his fears. The consciousness of the presence of God, a loving Father, is the greatest antidote for fear that the human race has ever found.

Feeding.—It is well to remember that fear, after all, is part of the necessary equipment of the organism that survives, that it is still essential in a modified form for the self-protection of the race. Feeding is another instinct that has the same fundamental basis. Because food is so necessary to life and contributes so much to the happiness of the child, it is often mentioned by the Beginner.

This interest may be the starting point for many social habits and attitudes. The teacher helps the child to discover to whom he is indebted for food—the grocer, the farmer, the baker, the milkman, and most of all to God. When he understands he feels gratitude, and very often his earliest prayers mention this fact or are in the form of grace at table. Occasionally it is desirable that the Beginner teacher have a party for the children or on a Sunday morning let each one have a berry or a drink of milk or a cracker with honey in order that thanking God may become associated in the child's

mind with the taking of food, a custom which is sadly lacking in many homes to-day.

Not only may the child learn thankfulness through feeding but he may also learn to share food very early and to be courteous in the taking of food at table. Then when his sympathies are aroused for others less fortunate than he, it is food that he first thinks of giving to them because of the value he sets upon it himself. When he brings the apple or the orange for the child in the orphanage or the glass of jelly for the grandma in the Old People's Home, he has a keen sense of conferring a benefit, and he can with a little appreciation so easily get the pleasure that will lead to a repetition of this desirable response.

Individualism.—The Kindergarten child is, as a rule, very individualistic, and this individualism shows itself in several characteristic responses. When the child discovers that he is a separate being, and not one with mother, father and the rest of the family, there often comes a period of contrary suggestion. Whatever is asked of him, he tries to do the opposite: if told to walk softly, he stamps; if asked to repeat a Mother Goose Rime, he is stubbornly silent, although he has just been reciting one; if called to come to the teacher, he pretends that he does not hear. He is testing himself against other selves and learning how far his dominion extends.

If he is handled tactfully at this time—the word "don't" used as little as possible, the word "do" only when necessary and then firmly enforced, a choice offered when possible with proper consequences entailed—he will gradually learn, as ability to think and imagination and memory develop, that

it pays to obey and to cooperate and the contrariness will disappear. If the parent and the teacher can keep calm, loving, and impersonal, the child will pass through this period of adjustment happily and, as a rule, quickly, but if he meets with impatience, anger, and arbitrary treatment, he may assume an obstinate, sulky attitude which will always remain with him.

Fighting is another manifestation that begins at this time. If the child is interrupted in an activity, if his toy is seized by another child, if someone says that which he doesn't want to hear, he often impulsively strikes with his hands and on occasion will bite, kick, and scratch as well—in fact, he behaves much like the young of the wild. His first response to other children is often to strike at them and he has to learn through social disapproval that this is a wrong way to show his interest, for sometimes it is interest, and attraction, that are prompting his action.

It is slow work teaching the child to inhibit the fighting response when angry and to submit the difficulty to the teacher or the group for discussion and settlement, but gradually he learns not to fight with his fists unless it is the only way to get his rights. In a certain kindergarten very often during the work period in the morning you will see a little child strike a note on the piano; whenever this sound is heard the group comes instantly to attention and the child tells his complaint or gives his suggestion. Then the group come together for a conference as to what should be done; there are over fifty children enrolled in this kindergarten, and much freedom for self-initiated activities is

allowed, but no fighting or quarreling goes on after the first few weeks of school because a better way has been found to settle disagreements.

The child of four or five is often very assertive about forcing his way to the front of the group in order to get the best view or grip upon picture, flower, or other object displayed by the teacher. He takes instantly the biggest piece of cake, the chair next to the teacher if he wants it, or every turn in the activity provided he can get it. He is, of course, very unaware of any selfishness or lack of fair play in this conduct; he is simply following an inner urge to further his own ends. He has to learn the rights of others, his place in the group.

Fortunately, the Kindergarten child is very much interested in the behavior of others and very eager for approval of his own behavior. He therefore, with a little wise guidance, will become quite a "stickler" for taking turns. He also gets pleasure out of giving provided his conduct meets with approval and appreciation. Stephen sat for several Sundays by his beloved teacher until on a certain Sunday he was asked to give the coveted place to the birthday child. He rather reluctantly acceded to the request and the teacher thanked him very cordially. Later in the morning the teacher spoke of those things which had made the morning a happy one and she mentioned the boy who had given his chair to the birthday child. The next Sunday Stephen shared his seat readily and with a beaming face.

Rhythm.—The interest in rhythm and the ability to respond rhythmically in movement are both noticeable. One evidence of this is the child's

delight in repetition found in the refrain of a song or in the story like that of "The Old Woman and the Pig." It is well for the Kindergarten teacher to keep this interest in mind in choosing verse and tale. The child's first appreciation of music and his first musical response are to the rhythm.

The average child, as a rule, can use hands and feet and the body to accent the beat of music before he sings the tune. The teacher can use this ability to give outlet to energy that demands such a safety valve and at the same time the child is learning to act with other children in an ordered way which produces a feeling of contentment and harmony. He is also learning to listen to music and to feel its meaning. The happiness upon the faces of little children and the laughter that comes now and then when they skip and gallop and go "stamping" prove that the activity meets an inner need.

Communication.—This child is very communicative. Miss Whitley reports a day's observation of three Beginners, and there were hardly five minutes consecutively when they did not talk. Children of four and five vary greatly in the actual number of words in the vocabulary, but the average number from several studies is over eighteen hundred for four-year-olds and over four thousand for five-year-olds. About eighty per cent of all the words used are nouns and verbs and then follow adjectives, adverbs, and pronouns, and a very few prepositions and conjunctions.

The Kindergarten child would prefer to talk himself as a rule, but he will listen to the teacher and to the other children, so that a group at this age

can have a real conversation and do share their experiences in this way, influence one another, and gain information.

One charming characteristic of the Kindergarten child is his frankness in speech. A small boy was visiting another Sunday school with his mother. When the teacher asked him at the close of the session how he liked it, he said, "Well, I liked it some, but ours is lots nicer. Miss Jones has a prettier dress than you have." His mother in much embarrassment tried to explain and apologize, while the child was unable to understand that he had made a mistake. Hadn't he answered the question in good faith and to the best of his ability?

The child is also experimenting with vocabulary. When he needs a new word, he often coins it, as did the child who said that the bulbs had begun to "splute." The teacher should use some new words but not too many, and she should be sure that the child gets the correct meaning. When he coins a word, she should substitute the correct form in replying to his remark without showing amusement over his mistake. Talking down to little children, using baby talk, or forcing the child to keep silent for long periods of time, are all mistakes that adults very frequently make. The child's mental and social gain from communication is great in proportion to the help he receives from the adults in his environment.

Curiosity.—Curiosity manifests itself in these years not only in a desire to investigate sense stimuli by wanting to see, hear, taste, smell, touch, and manipulate those things that arouse interest and attract attention, but also by a continuous

flow of questions. In the beginning the child may not pause for an answer to his questions, but by the fourth year he insists upon an answer. The world of nature stimulates questions far faster than they can be answered: What makes the smoke go up? Where do the clouds come from? How do the birds fly? Where do they get their wings? Why don't I have wings? What makes the color in the flowers? Why do they go to seed? Where does the hen get the little chickens? Where is the piece out of the moon? What makes it snow?

The world of industry affords a fresh supply: Why do we have to pay money for things? What's a bank? Why does my father go down town every day? What are the lights on the street-car for? Why does the butcher wear an apron? Nor does this indefatigable asker of questions hesitate in the realm of religion: Who is God? Why can't I see him? Where is he? How do you get to heaven? What is dead? Can't you walk if you're dead? Why don't God let bad people go to heaven?

It is most important that the parent and the teacher answer all questions in language that the child understands that they do not tell him more than he can assimilate and use, and that they tell him the truth as far as any information is given. He does not read yet and he has to depend upon people to give him the knowledge that he craves. If his mind is to be kept alert and inquiring, it must be satisfied by rational replies; otherwise the time may come when he ceases to question and therefore ceases to grow intellectually, for thinking is dependent upon the questions.

Untrue replies make the child lose confidence

when he finds out that he has been deceived, as he inevitably will. If the parent or teacher has not sufficient knowledge to answer the question, the child respects much more fully the one who frankly confesses that he does not know but will try to find out. Occasionally the question touches one of the great mysteries, as does that inquiry asked more than once by a Beginner, "Who made God?" Then let the child wonder after he has been told that there are some things which even the wisest men do not yet know but which grown people as well as little children never cease to inquire about. His questions are the teacher's greatest opportunity to discover what his needs are and to help him.

Imitation.—Little children copy, often with surprising exactness, the movements, sounds, postures of those about them. The four- and five-year-old child not only does this, but he goes a step further and imitates imaginary characters in his stories or in tales that he makes up himself. He can follow a short plot fairly well and his dramatic ability would sometimes do credit to an experienced actor. So vivid is his image of horse, bear, or fireman that for a brief space it would seem that the small boy had been bewitched into one of these characters.

He also unconsciously imitates the behavior of the members of his family—tones of voice, expression of face, typical gestures, favorite phrases are all carried over into his habit-formation until he becomes a small copy of the pleasing or displeasing characteristics of his family. Their attitudes are reflected in his responses: if the telephone rings, he may say, "Oh, dear, there goes that old bell again," or he may call out eagerly: "The telephone is ring-

ing. Shall I answer it?" Imitation offers the teacher as well as the parent a great opportunity to set right patterns for forming habits and to supply good copies in stories for impersonation.

Manipulation.—Manipulation is very evident in the very young child; he likes to poke, pound, scratch, tear, turn, twist, and otherwise handle whatever comes into his possession. This activity may easily become destructive; in fact, a part of it is inevitably so; but as the child is supplied with materials and toys that satisfy curiosity, promote his play interests, and stimulate expression he becomes constructive rather than destructive.

During the years of four and five he delights to make things, although the work of his hands is crude and often unrecognizable. He has none the less joy in the clay goat, the paper rocking chair, or the crayon portrait of grandfather. Through manual activity he learns to understand the world about him and to think, to purpose, to create. It is perhaps his best means of self-expression, and should therefore be used by the Beginner teacher.

Play.—The tendency to play is not only characteristic of the human young but of the young of animal families as well. All children are active if they are at all normal, and the constant expression of this activity is play.

Doctor Dewey has called play an attitude because it so characterizes everything that the child does. He is expending excess energy in play, to be sure, and through the constant copying of adult activities he is preparing for participation in these activities when he is older, but no such practical aims as these motivate consciously his play. He

plays for the joy of the activity and with no purpose in view except the satisfactory completion of his play project. If the game does not bring satisfaction, he quits it for another. He works hard in his play, sometimes to the point of exhaustion—because he fatigues easily in these years—but he does it under the stimulus of the play interest and without sensing the oncoming of fatigue.

His play extends over a wide range; the divisions of Miss Palmer's book, *Play Life in the First Eight Years*—sense and movement play, social play, language play including conversation, story and song, manual play and dramatic play—show how completely play captures the life of the Beginner. The favorite plays at four and five are, as a rule, those of dramatic imitation where the element of "make-believe" has a large part. The child needs practically no stage setting; a chair may represent a house or a castle or a train or a bed, as demand dictates. Although there is some interest in adornment, a mere touch of costume as a handkerchief for a plume or a stick for a horse, is sufficient if any at all is demanded.

The teacher has to understand the play attitude of this child or she fails in an attempt to teach him. She must be able to enter into his world as a little child and to guide him into the acquisition of habits, attitudes, and knowledge through participation in his play interests. As soon as any activity becomes work in the sense of loss of play attitude, then the child's interest and attention wane. He wiggles on his chair, fusses with his neighbor, wants to know when he is going home, or invents a rival activity. Education through

play is not a special brand of education to be employed at four or five which we may take or leave at will, but it is the only way to educate in these years.

Social responses.—There are several social responses which aid very much in balancing the individualism of the Kindergarten child. He likes to be with other people, especially with other children, and it causes him dissatisfaction to be separated from them if he is a normal child. The teacher can very often help him to inhibit his non-social responses such as striking, pulling, pinching, and the like, by eliminating him from the group every time they occur if he is the aggressor.

He not only likes to be with other children but he is learning gradually to do things with them and to lead in a group enterprise. He can wait his turn and is very insistent that others do likewise, and he can take his part well when the time comes. To be sure, the game must be very short at four, and the group small, but at five the play may occupy a much longer period and the group be considerably larger. An ideal group at four consists of eight to twelve children, and at five there may be twice that number. Of course many teachers must handle much larger groups than these and do the best possible under conditions that are not ideal.

The Kindergarten child loves approval, from parent and teacher first, but also from the other children. In some instances approval from the group is more potent than from the teacher. The teacher has to be very careful in bestowing appreciation on the individual child that she gives it in such a

way as to put the emphasis upon effort rather than result and to place constantly before the child a little higher standard for his next attempt. It is quite possible to make a Beginner vain and self-satisfied, a disagreeable little boaster always trying to show off. If, however, praise is given to the entire group often and discriminating approval to those who merit it, especially to the timid children, the results will be far better than if disapproval and negative criticism are continually employed. Disapproval is more effective with some children than approval, but it also must be used with discretion and in decidedly homeopathic doses, lest discouragement and dislike set in.

When the children are getting ready for a story, if the teacher says, "I see one little girl who is ready for the story; she has her hands in her lap and her feet on the floor and she is looking at me," it will be much more effective than if she remarks: "Just see the children who are turning around and annoying their neighbors. I don't believe that we can have a story to-day." The first remark will almost invariably bring the group to order, while the second has a doubtful value and only secures attention through the threat that the story can't be told.

The Kindergarten child is sympathetic if he understands the need or the distress of another. If the story portrays a little girl who has lost her doll, on the faces of many little girls in the group will be written great distress; or if the tale tells of children who are very hungry and haven't any food, every child is ready to share his food with them. The teacher can use this characteristic in interesting the chil-

KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN WATCHING THEIR PETS

dren to help others, provided she wisely chooses needs common to their experience which they can understand and provided she makes clear her point through careful illustration.

Nurturing.—Little children of four and five show a decided interest in nurturing or mothering; this is especially true of little girls but is also evident in boys. The child will bestow motherly care, including patting, cuddling, rocking movements upon dolls, pets, younger children, older people sometimes, and even upon inanimate objects such as boxes, pillows, sticks. In the latter instance the object is often a "make-believe" baby or dolly.

This response is a very important one, as it may serve as a substitute for the cruel treatment that some children bestow upon animals and insects in particular. Miss Poulsson says that if you would have a little child careful, you must give him something to care for; tender, something to tend. The teacher of religious education is especially interested in stimulating this nurture response by having the older children in the department help the younger, by suggesting helpfulness in the home, by bringing some pets and plants into the church school from time to time in order to start the right attitudes and habits in their care, and by using a few dolls in the class.

One Beginners' Department has three dolls—Betty, a girl; Bobby, a boy; and Jean, the baby; every Sunday morning they have their place in the group and are carefully tended and rocked to sleep to "Hush-a-bye Baby" or some other lullaby. One little boy remarked loudly on a Sunday when his right to hold a doll was questioned, "Why,

babies need fathers as much as mothers." So they do, and it is well through such plays to stimulate the gentle, kindly attitudes that will make consideration of the helpless, the weak and ill a social duty later.

Wonder.—Of all the responses of early childhood none is more beautiful than wonder. Whenever the marvels and beauties of the common life first startle the little child, he evidences surprise, and when he does not readily understand, wonder. He will stand with eyes wide open, gaze intent, face and body quiet but eager while he watches a squirrel balancing on the topmost branch of the old oak tree, or the moon peeping out from behind the cloud, or the waves pounding in upon the beach, or the little green shoot coming out from the ground where he has planted a seed.

And his wonder does not stop here but extends to the field of man's achievement. One Sunday morning the children had been listening to the hidden voice in the little box called a victrola. The teacher had explained to them as well as she could how the sound of the voice had been imprisoned there and could be released again and again for them to hear. When they had talked for quite awhile, one little child said, "There are lots of wonderful things in the world, victrolas and aeroplanes and the radio. Do you know I don't hardly understand the radio." And the teacher had to confess that she did not fully understand it.

The wonder of the child should not be quickly dispelled by the matter-of-fact, scientific attitude of the adult. As the little child kneels before the window looking out at the night sky spangled with the myriad stars bathed in the light of the silver

moon, feeling the stillness of the night and the vastness of the world, how fatal to his wonder, which at this moment might so easily deepen into God-consciousness, to hear a nervous voice say: "Now, hurry up and say your prayers. What are you staying at that window so long for any way?" Thus do the mother and teacher too often hastily conclude those rare moments of wonder that provide the best approach to reverence and to worship.

For further discussion:

1. What part does inheritance play in the scheme of education?
2. What instinctive responses should be modified? What responses should be perpetuated?
3. What would you do to overcome fear of darkness?
4. Give an illustration of substitution in the modification of an instinct.
5. Why does the fairy tale often produce fear in the little child?
6. Can you justify the apparent selfishness of the kindergarten child?
7. What would you say to the child who asks, "Why can't I see God?"
8. How would you explain the change in the obedient child of three or four who suddenly begins to do just the opposite of what is asked of him?
9. Illustrate the use of approval and disapproval in social education.
10. Why is "wonder" so valuable a response in the religious development of the child?

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CHAPTER V

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

In listing the common characteristics and interests of Beginners it is possible to think of a type of child who is the key to the nature and needs of every child entering the Beginners' Department. The course of study may be planned to fit him and materials selected accordingly; but fortunately the typical child is an unreal child, after all, for teaching would be robbed of nine tenths of its charm if all children at any age behaved alike and had identical needs. There is no sameness in children and therefore no tameness in teaching.

Every child is a separate problem demanding special study and to some extent special adaptations of the curriculum for his successful education. Differences in physical appearance have long been recognized because so obvious. James has brown hair; Ralph, black; Susie is very small and plump for four, while Betty is tall and slender; Teddy has long, slender fingers, and Marjorie short, stubby ones. No two children, even though they be twins, have exactly the same physical characteristics; and these differences contribute to the variety and interest of the human family. The great mental differences are not so outwardly visible, and although they have been surmised about for a long time, they have never until recently been seriously considered in planning a course of study.

Means of determining.—Several means are now employed by the teacher to discover how her children differ. Records are kept for individual children from day to day or from week to week showing how they vary in certain important particulars, such as sustained interest and attention, spontaneous expression, cooperation with the group, and response to certain ideals or standards in control. Surveys are made by the teacher as she visits in the homes which contain some of the important points in the history of the child and the status of the home, as, for instance, the date and place of birth, the nationality of the parents, the serious illnesses of the child, the occupations of the parents, the economic condition of the home, the sanitary condition of the home, the attitude of the parents toward the children and toward the school or church school, the attitude of the children toward the parents and toward the teacher as she visits.

Physical tests can be given by the teacher if a physician or nurse is not available which will reveal where the child stands with reference to normal weight and height for his age, whether eyes and ears are defective, whether adenoids or enlarged tonsils demand attention, what the pulse and temperature are—in short, she can detect physical needs requiring special attention. The Kindergarten teacher in the day school or the church school should feel as responsible to render this service as any other in her teaching program.

Then there are several tests which are fairly accurate in determining mental differences in Kindergarten children, such as the Binet-Simon Intelli-

gence Test and the Performance Tests by Pintner and Patterson. These tests the teacher cannot use wisely unless she has had at least one course in Mental Measurement, but any little child whose responses give her serious concern because they indicate that he is under age mentally, may find someone in the public schools, as a rule, capable of making the test for her. The larger cities have Child Study Departments in connection with the schools which provide a free clinic for such cases, and often greatly assist the mother and the teacher who find a real problem in this little child who is at a serious mental disadvantage.

Variations in mental ability.—The widest variations are found in general mental ability. These have been roughly designated by grouping children in the following classes: exceptional, good, average, poor, stupid. The largest number are always found in the average group and the very smallest in the exceptional and stupid or feeble-minded groups. But within every one of these groups there is really an infinite shading in native ability, not only in general intelligence but also in every special talent and characteristic. Seashore has devised tests in music, for instance, which show a variation of from one to eighty in native ability in music. No longer are long fingers the only qualification for insuring success in violin playing, as they were once considered by the old violin master.

Causes of differences.—What are the causes for these differences in children? They are very familiar to every one of us. Family is the first that we should probably name. About seventy-five per cent of the child's inheritance comes directly from

his father and mother and his four grandparents, and the remaining twenty-five per cent from the remaining ancestors going back several generations. This inheritance not only conditions physical features even to such peculiarities as a large nose, a pointed chin, or a diminutive little toe, but it often accounts for tendencies to disease, mental traits, such as a memory for dates, special ability in science, music, or art, for differences in temperament such as stubbornness, a sweet temper and vivacity.

Sex is another cause, although the differences due to this factor are not so noticeable in Beginners. However, boys are more noisy, more self-assertive, more interested in fighting and rough plays even at this age; and girls are, on the whole, more retiring, more quiet, and more motherly in their attitude toward younger children and dolls. The physical differences due to race are quite evident, as are some of the temperamental differences; at five years of age the Italian and the Pole show all the characteristic separation of the sunny south and the frozen north. The mental differences occasioned by race are still too much in the field of conjecture to venture any assertions.

Age is the cause of important differences, and we learn that age to-day does not mean merely the number of years since the child was born or his chronological age, but it means also his mental age, his physiological age, his social and moral age. The child who is four by the calendar may be five mentally, four and a half in physical development according to physical standards and just four in social and moral development so far as we have

any data on what may be expected socially from a normal four-year-old. Degree of maturity along these lines accounts for many variations; the child who is almost six in the Beginners' Department is a very different child from the one who is entering at four: different in attention, in memory, in ability to think, in social cooperation, in performance of rhythms, in size—in fact, in every single characteristic so far as four and six mean four and six, physically, mentally, morally, and socially.

When we have taken account of family, sex, age, and race, there is still another cause for difference in environment and training. One child comes from a home where there is too much food, too many clothes, too great variety of toys; another child is starved for milk and bread, shivers with the winter cold, and has nothing to play with except old cans and sticks. Some children have jazz and the comic supplement as their daily nurture in art, while others hear the classic old tunes and folk melodies and own the best storybooks.

Jane has a father and mother who constantly bicker and quarrel, who punish the children as the notion seizes them, and who never get on with the neighbors; Mary comes from a home of sweet tranquillity, where everybody is at peace and the children are understood and rationally treated. The Beginner, young though he is, has imitated not wisely but too well perhaps; at any rate he is a small reflection to comical detail of the environment and training of his first four years. He talks in father's loud voice, whines with sister's nasal twang, makes ugly faces when spoken to after the pattern of big brother, and copies mother's

nervous manner in moving about the room. Moreover, he is spiteful, disorderly, disobedient, unkind, or the opposite as example and training have made him.

Writers disagree as to which is the more important, nature or nurture; it is well to remember that both are tremendously important, and since teachers do not control inheritance but can to a certain extent influence environment, it is their supreme obligation to make the most of that which nature offers. If nature is the determining factor in mentality, nurture may be and doubtless is often the determining factor in morality.

The slow child.—There are several outstanding problems among children due often to some one or a combination of the causes which we have been discussing. There is the slow or dull child, recognized many times by the vacant or dreamy expression of the face, the hanging head, inert body, and open mouth. He lags behind the rest of the group, waits around for the teacher to help or suggest, sits heavily upon his chair, pays no attention when first spoken to, fails to take part in many of the activities, and is clumsy and slow in the use of his hands and body.

His behavior may be the result of poor mentality, retarded development, foreign parentage, defective sight or hearing, diseased tonsils and adenoids, wrong diet, too little sleep—any one of these or other causes may have contributed to his condition. The teacher must discover the cause or causes and treat the child accordingly. If there is any physical defect or disease, it should be cured if possible, or at least alleviated. Right home

conditions must be secured through cooperation with the parents. The foreign child must have help in learning English and the retarded child the stimulus of much attention from the teacher and play with the other children. He needs sense play to develop observation and ability to attend and movement play that will stimulate ready response.

The child who is feeble-minded and who evidences an ugly temper or undesirable habits in the presence of the other children, or who because of helplessness or marked slowness takes an unfair amount of the teacher's time, should not be a member of the group. The amount of gain to him is out of all proportion to the loss of every other individual in the group, and methods designed to develop the normal child are not adjusted to his needs.

The very active child.—The opposite of the slow child is the very active child. All children are active, but occasionally one stands out from the group as a special problem because of his unusual activity. As a rule, he is the child with the bright eyes, expressive face, alert and vigorous body, head carried high. He enters the room running or skipping, wriggles in his chair, talks constantly, volunteers for every activity, observes everything, and is quick and clever in the use of his body. Sometimes his movements are nervous and jerky; his color is high, especially after the first half hour is past; he cries easily and his emotions are intense.

The younger children in the group are likely to be the most lively and the most uncontrolled in their activity, all other things being equal.

Other causes for activity plus are good health, a fine mentality, and the stimulus of a different environment. Some only children are very much stimulated when they enter the church school by the presence of the other children, and that stimulation shows itself in restlessness, talking and fussing with the other children.

The cause for the unfavorable responses of some very active children is nervousness. Unfortunately, the neurotic child is becoming constantly more evident in American life, and many factors contribute to his condition. The child of neurotic parents is likely to be nervous both by force of the atmosphere and example of the home and by inheritance of the tendency. Then a wrong diet, including much rich, spicy food, meats and sweets, too little sleep, bad ventilation, improper clothing, and the various defects and diseases which accompany these poor conditions may all result in nervousness. Overstimulation from too many toys, too much entertainment in the home, the radio and the movie are altogether too prevalent causes. And, finally, arbitrary treatment on the part of the parent or teacher, great severity at times, and much leniency at other times, the presence of fears and worries, the development of overconscientiousness, contribute to nervousness.

If the activity of the child is due to good health and good mentality, then the teacher should supply plenty of outlet in rhythm, songs, conversation, and handwork. Without being unfair to the other children, she must keep the very active child busy by letting him run an occasional errand, have an extra responsibility in looking after some younger

child or in passing the basket for the pennies, and in making another picture or other handwork favor for some little child at home or for father or mother. Occasionally it is wise to promote this child earlier than the rest of the group. If, however, the great activity is nervous in character, then the child needs the help of the teacher in righting the bad physical conditions in the home and in securing a quiet, even environment with plenty of fresh air, sleep, and rest periods and with rational control eliminating fear and worry and developing happiness and contentment.

In the church school the teacher will be especially careful in addressing this child to speak in a quiet, happy tone which calms and wins cooperation, in seeing that he does not become overexcited by the activities of the morning and in the beginning by sending him out of the room occasionally with a helper on some little errand if she observes that a few minutes separation from the other children is what he needs to quiet and rest him. It is to be hoped that the Beginner teacher does not have too many children to prevent her ready adjustment to their individual needs, for in this way only can she make her teaching of the greatest service.

The timid child.—All Beginners are likely to be timid at times but there are certain children who are characteristically timid. Such a child shows timidity by the unhappy, worried expression of the face, the averted eyes, the retreating body, lowered chest and head. He sidles slowly into the room, sinks into a chair, seeks wall spaces and corners, as if trying to escape attention, often

shows sensitive color, cries when separated from his parents, and is always more easily frightened than the other children. At times, if forced to take part in the activities of the group, he will show considerable stubbornness. If handled rightly, as he gradually overcomes timidity he becomes deeply interested in what is going on about him, and as he begins to participate he will show the greatest joy.

The timid child is often the child of finest intelligence, vivid imagination, and sensitive emotional nature, one who has rare possibilities for creative expression and for leadership. The outstanding cause for timidity is fear, and the various fears with their attendant occasions we have already discussed fully. The child who is made self-conscious by too much attention from older people, by unwise criticism or praise, and by being forced to "show off" before guests, sometimes becomes timid in the presence of a group of people. The child who has never mingled with other children and has seen few grown-ups save those of his own family, is frequently timid when first brought to Sunday school. An unwell child or one who has just recovered from illness and feels the effects of lowered vitality, is likely to be timid at that time, though usually not at all so.

The timid child, whatever the immediate occasion, needs tactful handling in the group. He should not have attention called to him by singling him out to answer questions, tell stories or sing songs until he has overcome his timidity sufficiently to take part freely in general responses and to volunteer to take an individual part occasionally.

He should not be noticed publicly, and when spoken to privately the attention should be quietly and very gently bestowed.

A child one morning in the circle had just returned from a long absence due to serious illness. The teacher with the best intentions in the world sang a welcome to him, had individual children shake hands with him, chose a game in his honor, and was completely mystified when finally his eyes filled with tears, a pained expression crossed his face, and he began to sob softly. He was a very timid child at all times and the return to kindergarten was made for him a dreadful ordeal by the effusive welcome.

Although we should not bestow unwise attention on this child he does need to feel the love and sympathy of the teacher more than do the other children—a little pat on the head, a hand slipped into his in a lonesome moment, a word of encouragement dropped here and there are boons that he will never forget. The teacher in making his acquaintance must follow the indications of feeling in his face as to how far she may go in expressing her interest in him. Such a child often refuses to shake hands with a strange teacher for two or three Sundays, in which event it is well not to press the hand clasp but to offer it kindly the next Sunday until he responds, as he will in time. Trust in the teacher and a trust in God, the good heavenly Father, will go far toward helping to overcome timidity, as will the development of an ideal of courage which even a Beginner may possess.

After the timid child has become free and happy in the room and with the teacher and children,

he may still hesitate to take part in certain activities like the march which he has refused to participate in at the beginning. It has become a habit with him to sit in his chair while the rest of the children are active; then it is often necessary for the teacher to take him gently but firmly by the hand and have him act with her, but never until a bond of trust and friendship exists.

The self-assertive child.—The timid child has his antithesis in the one who is self-assertive. The self-assertive child is always active and often very active, but he has characteristics not possessed by every very active child. His face wears a keen expression, frequently self-conscious as well, the eyes are likely to be bold, the body advancing with chest forward, the head up, and the arms out. He is always pushing for the head of the line, the best seat, the most conspicuous place and he is very quick to take advantage of a slower child. "I want it," "Let me do it," "Give me a turn," are very frequent expressions. He often forces his leadership on the group of children and on the weak teacher, and takes great pride in "bossing" the other children. When he is the center of attention, his face wears a pleased, satisfied expression.

Such individualism is to a certain extent instinctive, a part of the plan for the self-preservation and development of organism; "every child," according to Kirkpatrick, "is a persistent beggar." Added to the instinct some children have unusual native qualities for leadership in a fine mentality and a strong will, and they possess good health and plenty of vitality. A child so endowed is very easily rendered conscious in his innocent self-

assertion by too much praise and attention from older people; he then frequently bids for notice, becomes silly or impudent, and is a very unpleasant member of the group. When self-assertion is natural and unconscious, the child should be allowed to share in leadership, for he has a real contribution to make and initiative is needed, but he should be shown that to be a good leader one must also be a good follower and that fair play demands a sharing of all opportunities.

The self-conscious child who is assertive needs to be ignored as much as possible and his opportunities to "show off" should be minimized. Sometimes it is well to promote him to harder work and the "give-and-take" of child society is one of the best antidotes in any event. As he learns to forget himself in the group, gradually leadership may be safely accorded him. Teachers are often offenders in giving too much time and attention to the bright child, who is not infrequently rendered self-conscious and assertive and becomes a nuisance in the group. It is well to remember that it is the slow child and the timid child who need the most praise and encouragement and who will profit most by such treatment.

The stubborn child.—Of all the problems that the teacher has to cope with the stubborn child is perhaps the most formidable. As a rule he is not continually in the stubborn mood but takes "spells." He may be of the hot-tempered type whose eyes are angry, face flushed, hands clenched, and who strikes, bites, kicks, and slaps while he shrieks at the person who opposes him, and ends the tantrum by violent crying, throwing himself

upon the floor. Or he may be the sullen type, in which event the eyes will be cold in expression, the head set sideways, the face white with a peculiar smile about the mouth. The body becomes rigid and the hands and feet grip the chair or other article of furniture near at hand. This sullen child will often sulk for several hours.

The stubborn child may be distinguished from the timid child by the position of the chest, which is an infallible guide; it is high in the stubborn child and depressed in the timid child. Causes for stubbornness, aside from an inherited tendency such as we find in some families and peoples, are usually found in the misunderstanding and mismanagement of the child at home. The child who is indulged, who has his every wish granted, often rules the family with a rod of iron; any effort to oppose him is met with a stubborn resistance of either the quick-tempered or sullen variety, and to save a scene the household soon yields. When he first goes to school or to Sunday school he tries the same tactics which have heretofore worked in securing him his own sweet way.

On the other hand cruel treatment at home or at school, constant fault-finding, the persistent attempt to "break the child's will," may result in forcing the child to a spineless subjection or to a stubborn set, depending upon his disposition. Habitual poor health, due to illness or bad living conditions, may be the occasion for an irritable resistance on the child's part. The fearful child who is forced sometimes becomes a stubborn child in self-defense. If the remote occasion for stubbornness lies in fear or in poor health or misman-

agement at home, then the teacher must attempt to get these conditions remedied, for the immediate handling of the stubborn attack will not serve to eliminate such conduct entirely unless the original cause is eradicated.

The quick-tempered child should be approached tactfully, should not be annoyed or teased or interfered with unnecessarily, and explosions of temper should be avoided whenever possible, because they so easily become habitual and occur more and more frequently. Arguments have no effect upon the child in a fit of anger; whatever action has to be taken by the teacher should be done quickly and firmly. A little shock such as a dash of water in the face or a sudden loud noise will often serve to break the stubborn set of the child who holds his breath or is screaming violently. The child who is inclined to sulk is often brought to obedience by ignoring for a time the cause of dispute and returning to the issue later after the child has been interested in some happy activity for a time.

When a child is ill, greatly fatigued, or nervous, the wise parent and teacher will avoid, except where principle is involved, commands that might make for irritation and resistance. The spirit of play on such an occasion often surmounts great obstacles, as it did when grandpa suggested that Harry, who was half sick and thoroughly chilled and who resisted all efforts to get him warm, was an automobile which needed a blanket on the engine, had to be rolled into a warm room and required gasoline. Even the hot milk went down smoothly when the "little red lane" led to a gasoline tank.

To secure prompt, cheerful obedience should be

the goal of every parent and teacher for every little child. To reach the goal three steps are necessary—the child must understand or know what the right is in any individual instance, he must want to do it, and he must possess the ability or self-control to do it.

Many times the child does not understand what the adult really wants him to do. The teacher should give her directions in a few simple words which she knows are in the child's vocabulary. She should explain carefully the reason for any new rules, often leading the children to work out such a necessary regulation, as, for instance, the rule that they should speak one at a time in the conversation group. She can call an individual child's attention to the example of the other children who are doing the desirable thing. One morning there was a single rose in the vase in the Beginners' Department, and this rose a certain little boy greatly coveted. He went over to the vase to take out the rose, but the teacher showed him that all the children would like the rose but that they were leaving it in the vase so that each one could enjoy it. He looked about and saw that he was the only child out of his seat, and then went back to his place obediently without the rose. Occasionally a story holds the mirror up to life and helps the child to understand, or an unhappy experience doing wrong convinces him that the right way is best.

But the teacher has a harder task than to make right understood, she must make it the thing that the child desires to do, so that he will repeat the act or maintain the conduct when she is not present.

Most children, like most grown-ups, want to do what others are doing; they like to be in the fashion, so that the teacher has a great influence over the one or two individuals who do not want to act in a certain way if she has made that sort of "goodness fashionable" in the group. A story sometimes inspires an individual child with the wish to emulate, while the approval of mother, teacher, or the other children, their appreciation of this little child's effort bring a satisfaction that makes him want to try again. On the other hand disapproval and punishment for wrong conduct, because they entail dissatisfaction, may drive him to the right course.

Then the teacher must help the child who understands and desires to obey, to acquire the ability to do. Sometimes he isn't physically able, as when he lacks balance in carrying the tray and all the silver slides off on the floor, or when he tries to skip and cannot get the coordination. Again, it is maturity of brain that is lacking, as when he fails in recalling certain facts in the story in a logical order, or he may not possess the necessary self-control—the will power, as it is sometimes termed. In the former instance the teacher will have to make many allowances for the Beginner; in the latter certain suggestions may be helpful.

The child who refuses to act is often aided by being given a choice of two ways, with a penalty attached to the wrong choice that will bring dissatisfaction. Giving some children a time limit, as, for instance, to say that in five minutes they will have to begin to put their blocks away, serves to get right action when the command for immediate

response would be resisted. Repetition of the desirable act without exception is of vital importance in forming every good habit, and habit is a wonderful aid in getting good conduct.

The nonsocial child.—Occasionally the teacher meets a child who is aggressively nonsocial in all of his responses. Such a child once came to a kindergarten. He quarreled constantly with the other children—kicking, biting, and scratching them as well as hitting them. He would crush and tear up the flowers, frighten and torment the pets, destroy the work of the other children, and refuse to do one helpful act, while he wanted every turn and every favor for himself. He was an only child, pampered and flattered by many adults and without children as playmates. He was in a nervous, irritable condition from wrong feeding and had never learned the least self-control.

The teacher saw that his diet was changed. She pointed out with approval the children who were polite and kind, who took care of the pets and flowers. She tried to awaken sympathy and to create an attitude of helpfulness by showing the needs of other children and of the pets through stories and talks. She was very happy and spoke with warm appreciation when Dauph did the smallest kindly deed. She also used the disapproval of the other children to reenforce her own when Dauph acted meanly, and finding that he disliked very much separation from her and the group she sent him into a smaller room alone when he hurt the children or the pets. Gradually he changed his ways and grew less and less troublesome until he was a welcome member of the group.

The deceitful child.—Another problem is the child who either tells untruths or takes things that do not belong to him; sometimes he does both. His manner is sly, his glance usually shifty, his hands are likely to be behind his back or in his pockets, and if questioned he affirms his innocence.

Children deceive for various reasons, as do adults. Occasionally there is an inherited tendency, but frequently the untruth is told to get ahead, through imitation of others, because of fear of punishment, or is simply a fanciful tale which for the moment the child does not distinguish from the fact. The teacher should fathom the reason and see to it that if the child wants to gain praise, popularity, or some material possession through the lie, he never succeeds; for success will mean repetition of the method sooner or later. The child who has learned to deceive because of the older people or children with whom he associates should be helped if possible to better associations or at least to build a standard that will aid him in resisting. The child who is timid often lies to escape punishment, especially corporal punishment. He should be dealt with very gently and tactfully when the teacher knows that he has done wrong. The direct question should not be asked which tempts the untruth, but instead the teacher should kindly confront him with the truth and state the penalty without giving him a chance to deny. Fanciful stories under the caption of the imagination we have already discussed.

The child who takes things in a secretive way may do so because he has been taught to steal, as

is often the case in the slums of the great city; he may have inherited the tendency, or he may do so because of need or because no sense of property rights, of mine and thine, has yet been developed. If he has no proper food and is hungry or lacks toys or pretty things, then the teacher should try to find means to supply that need if it is a fundamental one.

The first step in building a keen sense of property rights is to see that the child has property of his own which others respect; then he can understand the fair play of leaving alone the possessions of others. He should never be permitted to keep that which he has taken by deceitful means, but should always have to return it to the rightful owner. If it is something that's eaten or lost, then he should be required to give one of his own or should take his money to buy another. In all possible ways the teacher should encourage generosity and unselfish sharing on the part of this child who usually has an extraordinary love of possessions and is often inclined to be greedy and selfish.

Deceitfulness in the child under six is not so serious as in the child over six and is often very innocently perpetrated, for he is neither moral nor immoral, but unmoral until ideals and habits are formed. It is, however, of vital importance that the teacher and parent meet rightly the first adventure from the path of openness and honesty.

Other types.—In discussing problem children we have spoken as if each child were a clearly defined type, whereas two or three of these problems often meet and mingle in one child, and all children evi-

dence more or less many of the symptoms chronicled here. Norsworthy and Whitley mention other differences, as the practical, common-sense child, the fanciful dreamer, the thoughtful reflective child, the impulsive reckless child, the suggestible child, the independent child, the child of delicate appreciations and sympathies, the child who is blunt, coarse, and hard to move.

Whatever the nature and needs of the individual child, the teacher should not forget that he has worthy possibilities and that society needs variation and can find a place for the talent of each one, however little it may be. Environment and training are powerful factors if rightly employed in eliminating and modifying undesirable characteristics and in directing and developing desirable ones for a "higher and grander humanity."

For further discussion:

1. Make a survey for one four- or five-year-old child including the following points:

Name of child.....Sex.....
Date of birth.....Place of birth.....
Nationality of father.....of mother.....
Occupation of father.....of mother.....
Economic status of home.....
Health conditions of home.....
Cultural background of home.....
Serious illnesses or accidents of child.....
Attitude of parents toward child.....
Attitude of parents toward church and church school .....
Attitude of child toward parents.....
Attitude of child toward teacher.....

2. Cite a difference in children due to sex; due to race; due to training.

3. How can the teacher determine scientifically the intelligence of the child? Are such results infallible?

4. Is self-assertion desirable? When should the self-assertive child be ignored?

5. Contrast the behavior of the slow child with that of the very active child. State how treatment should differ.

6. What are the causes for timidity? Should the timid child ever be forced to take part in group activity?

7. Is deceitfulness ever explained by the parent's attitude toward the child? What are some of the other causes with possible treatment?

8. Describe the reactions of the stubborn child and give the immediate and remote causes.

9. What three steps are essential in securing prompt, cheerful obedience on the child's part?

10. From the standpoint of society are individual differences desirable?

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CHAPTER VI

HABIT FORMATION

THERE is no more important task for the teacher of Beginners than the forming of habits, and nothing is more needed in the field of religious education than teachers and parents who know what habits to form, how to form them, and who possess the tact, the stamina and the persistence to follow the process through to successful completion.

Habit in its simplest form has been defined as the tendency to feel, to think, to act as one has felt, thought, or acted in the past. The well-trained child automatically brushes his teeth after breakfast, feels gratitude for food when he approaches the table, and thinks of possible danger as he nears the train crossing. The basis is laid for the habit in the nervous system, for as the nerve current passes over the nerve track it breaks down resistance at the synapses, or points of connection, so that each time it passes there is more ease and less likelihood that it will take another course.

Value of habit.—The value of good habits cannot be overestimated, for they assure the desirable activity or process in the given situation with a minimum of attention. They leave the child free to solve new problems and to make continually new and harder adjustments. The little child who has formed habits of self-care in putting on and

off his wraps, in hanging them up properly, in attending to his own bodily wants will have much more time in kindergarten to form other important habits, because he quickly and easily with little attention performs the first set of activities.

Disadvantages.—On the other hand there are disadvantages in habit formation. Habits are very hard to break because of their foundation in the nervous system; certain definite physical changes must take place when the child breaks the habit of thumb-sucking before he falls asleep or the habit of whining when he is hungry. In a given situation habit makes for one particular response and renders less likely any other response. If the child has learned to fetch a saucer of milk when the cat appears, he will probably fetch the milk even though the cat needs some other form of treatment. It has been suggested, therefore, that of all habits the most important one is "the habit of breaking habits" and forming new ones, that the growing individual mentally and morally is the one who has a rich fund of habits and who is ever making new adjustments to new situations, or better adjustments to old situations.

Law of exercise.—The *how* of habit formation is contained in two great laws—the law of exercise and the law of effect. The familiar old saying that practice makes perfect is true, and the amount of practice needed before the automatic stage is reached will depend upon the activity or process and upon the individual child. Some children are slower in all learning than others, and every child varies for different activities. Repetition, however, upon the child's own volition brings a better result

than that which is forced, and habit built upon an instinctive response is the more likely to succeed. The child who impulsively tries to take care of his pet can usually be taught quickly the habits necessary for its proper care.

As far as possible exceptions ought not to be permitted, for every exception interrupts the process and makes less assured the result. On the other hand common sense must be used, and to force a nervous child, an ill child, or one greatly fatigued to say "Please" before he is served or to kneel and pray before going to bed, or to do any one of several very desirable acts under ordinary circumstances, may mean the development of such distaste for the act that the success of all future repetitions will be jeopardized.

Although much learning on the part of children is incidental, due to suggestion and imitation, as when Mary acquires her nurse's English accent, her mother's nervous shaking of the head, her grandmother's fear in storms, or her brother's use of the knife in shoveling food, habits that are the result of conscious attention and understanding are more likely to persist under opposition or when strong temptation to break away comes. Little children who have discussed the way to carry chairs at Sunday school and who have decided upon a certain procedure as most desirable, are in less danger of imitating the new child who suggests the fascinating style of carrying chairs upon the head.

Law of effect.—The child who gets satisfaction or pleasure out of his response to a given situation or whose conduct is followed by satisfaction will tend to repeat that response the next time he

meets the situation. John knocks over the pile of blocks that Mary has erected. The loud noise of the falling blocks, the cries of Mary, the exhilaration of the movement itself please John greatly, and unless something is done to overtop the satisfaction by an experience closely following that brings dissatisfaction, John will surely repeat the act if Mary rebuilds the block structure.

Edwin brought a rose to his Sunday-school teacher. He had not been especially eager to give the rose away, but the teacher accepted it with such evident pleasure and spoke such words of appreciation that Edwin's face beamed. Every Sunday morning after that, as long as his garden had a flower in it, Edwin would not leave for church without his gift for the teacher.

If, however, dissatisfaction or annoyance accompanies or follows a response to a given situation, the child will be less likely to repeat the behavior. The first taste of olives or pepper often leaves the child unwilling to taste olives or pepper again. The child who takes his toy apart and cannot mend it, provided he cherishes the toy, may not essay another experiment of that kind. If great physical weariness accompanies or follows the first trip to Sunday school, the little one may not want to go again. The child who slaps a playmate and loses that playmate's society for the day, may behave differently the next time they meet.

The fact that the law of effect is ignored accounts for the loss of many good habits when children are away from the parent or teacher who has through fear of punishment gained their formation. From cleanliness to godliness there is not a habit

in the gamut that may not be displaced if it has been accompanied or followed by annoyance. Satisfaction may be physical, as, for instance, in the enjoyment of food; it may be emotional, as when appreciation is bestowed; or it may be intellectual, as in the gratification of some interest. What brings annoyance or satisfaction to one child may fail utterly in producing the same effect upon another. Even two children in the same family may differ greatly, so that each one has to be treated differently with reference to the formation of certain fundamental habits.

Plateaus.—When a child is learning—and this is especially true of the physical skills—there is usually rapid improvement in the beginning, followed later by what is technically called a plateau, or period when no appreciable gain is made. The plateau may be succeeded by another rapid rise. As far as possible it is well to avoid plateaus or to shorten their span by seeing that the child keeps his interest and attention fixed upon the work itself, and that he does not get excited or worried. His general health and the right physical conditions have much to do with success in learning.

Breaking habits.—In the breaking of undesirable habits it is necessary to attach dissatisfaction or annoyance to the bad response, and this can be done through a punishment which the child dislikes. When a punishment fails to have any effect it is useless and a waste of time to continue or repeat it. Sometimes it is wiser to change the situation or withdraw the stimulus that is causing the response, as when teasing provokes a fit of anger. Sometimes a desirable response may be

substituted for an undesirable one, as, for instance, manicuring the nails for biting them. In every instance except where attention magnifies self-consciousness it is well to win the good will and cooperation of the child himself, even though he be a young child, in breaking the habit.

Desirable habits.—Several physical habits have already been mentioned. A few of the important intellectual and social habits which the Beginner teacher should be interested in helping the child to form are:

1. Attending when spoken to.
2. Comprehending when first addressed.
3. Concentrating on his task.
4. Criticizing his own work and conduct.
5. Completing what he begins.
6. Following directions.
7. Acting as leader in a responsible way.
8. Saying "Please" and "Thank you" at the proper times.
9. Waiting for his turn.
10. Being on time.
11. Not taking the property of others.
12. Not annoying others by pushing, pulling, and the like.
13. Sharing with others (not taking the best for himself).
14. Not interrupting others in conversation or play unless it is necessary.
15. Taking part in a cooperative enterprise.
16. Obeying the rules of the group.
17. Thanking God for everything that makes him happy.
18. Asking God for help for himself and others.

Attitudes and appreciations which can be successfully cultivated in the Beginner and which go far toward motivating his conduct are: friendliness toward other children and friendliness and respect for the teachers, the janitors, the superintendent and the minister; confidence in self; necessary caution in fire, in crossing the streets, and the like; interest in and appreciation of living things and a kindly, protective feeling toward them; interest and appreciation for those who help in the home and a desire to help them in turn; reverence, love, and gratitude for God; appreciation and love for the beautiful in bright color, flowers, pictures, vases, and the like; appreciation of music, stories, and verse on the child's plane.

For further discussion:

1. Does mere "practice" make "perfect"? Discuss the principle involved.
2. Contrast the advantages and disadvantages of habit formation.
3. Are "plateaus" dangerous? Why do they occur?
4. From your observation of children give an illustration which shows the law of effect in forming habits.
5. How would you proceed in breaking the habit of thumb-sucking?
6. What caution should be kept in mind in making a list of desirable habits and attitudes for Beginners?

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PART II

SUBJECT MATTER CORRELATED WITH THE ACTIVITIES OF CHILD LIFE

CHAPTER VII

CONVERSATION

In the study of the instinctive behavior of the child we found that communication begins early. In the development of speech, which is a series of delicate motor coordinations, there is first the period of reflex and instinctive cries, then of language sounds without any association of ideas, later of language sounds with an association of ideas, and finally of sentence building. Within the first year babbling, the use of gesture and tone play, all appear. Before words emerge the child is communicating wants and wishes by means of gesture and tone, and long after he speaks words he supplements with much gesture and facial expression.

His first words are usually nouns, then verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, and last of all conjunctions, prepositions, and articles. At three he talks incessantly, often to himself or to an imaginary playmate. When he first comes to Sunday school at four or five he is very communicative and, as a rule, most eager to talk to the teachers and the other children, waiting only to get acquainted before the confidences and questions begin to flow. He is able to listen to other people talk as well as to talk himself, so that a group conversation is desirable and possible.

ATTAINMENTS THROUGH CONVERSATION

Gaining and giving information.—Through such informal conversation based upon the nature of the child and utilizing his interests, many valuable attainments can be secured. The child gains much information from other children as well as from the teacher, and by so doing enlarges his experience. A group of Kindergarten children were conversing one day about a pair of ringdoves which had been brought in to visit them.

"What are they called?" one child asked.

"Ringdoves," responded the one who had brought them. "They have rings around their necks."

"Are the rings tied around their necks?" questioned a child who was looking intently at the throat of one of the doves.

"Does anyone know?" asked the teacher.

No one did, so she continued: "The rings are made of feathers, and they grow in that way around the necks of the doves."

"How can they grow that way?" said a child with wonder in his voice.

"It is strange and wonderful," said the teacher, "but God has made many wonderful things and we don't know just how he does it."

The child also gives information, and in so doing feels himself a member of a social group, and grows in self-confidence and in fluency and beauty of expression. Little Betty first came to the church school when slightly over three; she was very quiet; in fact, she never in three months said a word when she sat in the large group. Finally she went to visit her grandmother, who lived in the coun-

try. On the first Sunday after her return the teacher questioned her as to where she had been. Betty replied: "I been to see my grandma. I went on the choo-choo! I saw a cow and a horse. I saw some little wee wee chickies. I saw a piggy. Ha! ha! ha!" And Betty laughed heartily as she recalled the piggy. We sat in amazement at this lengthy speech from one who had been so silent before; but Betty had a real contribution to make, and the appreciation of her audience gave her confidence for the future as well as the present.

Revealing misunderstanding.—Through conversation the teacher gets close to the children and learns what they think and feel. She has an opportunity to rectify her mistakes and to give the child the help that he may greatly need. Junior had been shown the picture of the stoning of Stephen. At the time he made no comment except to ask why the people wanted to kill Stephen. Two weeks later he made this significant remark, "I don't think that I will like Jesus any more."

"Why not?" he was asked at once.

"Because everybody that likes Jesus gets hurt or killed. You know Stephen did."

The seemingly all dark picture had been too much for the fearful little Beginner, and he intended to take no risks. A wise teacher showed him how many people Jesus had helped, and made well and happy; and he changed his mind about not liking Jesus.

On another occasion the picture of the Infant Christ had been shown when a little boy shouted, "He's a bad baby!" The teacher very quietly with no reproof sought the reason for this astonish-

ing statement. She found that the child had been talking to neighbor children whose parents did not believe in God or Christ. She brought out through question and comment the many good gifts God has given us and helped the children to see that Jesus was the best gift of all because of what he did to make people happy. When she finally said, "I think, Tommy, that if your little friends understood all that Jesus has done for us, they would love him," Tommy assented with a softened look upon his face.

Acquiring a common purpose.—As a result of talking together the children and the teacher have a common understanding which unites them and often enables them to work or play with a common purpose. The teacher in a certain church school brought to the children some pictures of a mission school in a near-by city. They discussed together the needs of the children in that school and decided that they wanted to give their money each Sunday to buy these other children food, toys, and some clothing. They were very eager to work for pennies in order to increase the fund as rapidly as possible.

Problems of a social nature can often be brought up when the children are together and a solution satisfactory to all evolved. James had introduced the undesirable trick of tripping other children by throwing out his foot when they were walking or skipping past him. The children and the teacher discussed the possibility of accident, decided that it was unkind and rude to treat anyone in this way, and agreed that the next child who put his foot out to trip others would have to leave the

group. Through such discussions standards for conduct are developed and ideals and attitudes formed, not one whit differently than in the club and organization meetings of grown-ups, except that the ideals are on the child's plane.

CONTENT OF CONVERSATION

The activities of the school.—The content of the conversations in the Beginners' Department will be as varied as the children's experiences. There is not an activity in the church school that will not elicit worthwhile conversation—song, story, picture study, handwork, rhythm, dramatization, prayer.

The child likes to discuss the content of song and story or picture with others; he thinks of similar songs and stories that he knows or of incidents out of his own experience of which he is reminded. He delights in planning his handwork with others and in telling how he made it and what he wishes to do with it. Rhythm and dramatization require much conference, and prayer should follow a talk about those gifts for which he would thank God or the help which he needs for himself or for others. The giving requires careful consideration and discussion in deciding upon causes to which to give and the needs to be met as well as how to meet them. The conduct of the children furnishes many problems which require conversation in their solution.

Home and community.—Then there are the familiar home happenings—washing, baking, sewing, visiting, shopping, sleeping, eating, playing. What each member of the family does, how the festivals

and birthdays are celebrated, the arrival of the new baby, the death of grandfather, the changes in home life related to the seasons—nothing is too small to be reported by these faithful little eye-and-ear witnesses or to elicit interest when told by the teacher or some other child. The home is the child's stage and the play is always on.

Closely connected with the home is the neighborhood and what transpires there. The carpenter, the grocer, the milkman, the postman, the iceman, the shoemaker, and several other helpers are well known to him. He is keenly interested in the essentials of the process of providing him with food, shelter, and clothing. Tools, materials, and compensation are given some attention but are not interesting in any great detail. The policeman and the fireman are often mentioned by city children, and soldiers and sailors less frequently unless the children live near a fort or naval station. These protectors are chiefly attractive because of their equipment and costumes and the more spectacular part of their work such as arresting people, putting out fires, marching, shooting, and the like.

The various means of transportation—trains, boats, autos, street-cars, aeroplanes—are fascinating and furnish a topic of endless conversation. How they operate, where they go, how they are made, and what it costs to ride on them are discussed as eagerly as if each child owned several, as they do at least in fancy.

The seasons.—Each season of the year brings new treasures that provoke a flood of questions and give rise to much valuable conversation. In the fall there are the leaves which delight with

their vivid color but which soon fall, to disclose the tiny leaf buds. The flowers seem to fade and die, but in their places are myriad seeds with their many interesting devices for dissemination and protection through the coming winter. The squirrels, the birds, and the caterpillars are all in their different ways preparing for winter, as are the farm animals. The harvest of fruits and vegetables is gathered in, rain falls, frost comes, the world is brown and bare—it is winter! Then what fun with ice and snow, skating and sleighing, watching the bright stars that shine before bedtime, taking care of the winter birds until the robin announces spring!

In the spring the birds return, the grass grows green, flowers blossom, gardens must be planted, baby animals are born, and sun, wind, and rain are great playfellows. Spring passes before the children know it, and summer, with its hot days, its water plays, its bees and butterflies and grasshoppers, its gay flowers and tall grasses, and its vacations, has come. Every season fills this child full of the marvels of nature, and in following his questions and in interpreting his experiences the teacher has abundant opportunity to lead him to God the Creator of this Wonderland.

The festivals.—The festivals hold a wealth of suggestive materials, and because they are celebrated in the home as well as in the community the child comes into direct contact with them. Some of these festivals are old nature festivals found in the life of the folk of many countries, and their original meaning is the one that has most interest and value for the child. Halloween,

for instance, was celebrated when the first sheaf was brought in at the time when nature is a glory with its ruddy fruit and gorgeous leaves. It was a gay and happy festival. The child of Kindergarten age is especially delighted with the pumpkin from which a jack-o'-lantern is made, but he readily responds in recalling other fruits and vegetables of the season and loves to dance with the dancing leaves.

Thanksgiving is not only an old Puritan festival come to be a national holiday but it was also in the history of the folk a festival of more solemn rejoicing when the last sheaf was brought in and the long, dark winter lay ahead. The child not only likes to talk about the harvest but also about the turkey and pumpkin pie and the other features of the home dinner, including the visits of relatives.

Christmas is for all Christians the celebration of the birthday of Christ, but where Christ was unknown it has still been celebrated in northern countries as a time for renewal of hope and love just before the sun begins his return to bring light and life to the dark world again. Christmas brings much talk of Santa Claus, that dear old symbol of gift giving, of gifts that the children hope to receive, of visits to toy shops, and of the birth of the Christ-child and the gifts that the children are to make for mother and daddy or to purchase for some mission of needy children.

Valentine's day means to a little child the making and the giving and receiving of valentines, and there is much to tell about these delightful surprises. The birthdays of Lincoln and Washington, Memorial Day and the Fourth of July mean little

to him from the standpoint of their historical significance, although he readily recognizes the pictures of these national heroes; but they are great days because of the flags, the marching soldiers, playing bands and on the Fourth the fireworks. He likes to talk of these things which he has seen and participated in, and the teacher can help to develop an attitude of respect for the soldiers and the sailors and a real love for the flag which is the beginning of patriotic feeling for the child.

Easter is not only the resurrection day of the Christ but it is the time of resurrection in nature. It is this latter significance which the Beginner can understand and of which he likes to talk—baby rabbits and chickens, tulips and daffodils, robins and bluebirds, the sun and the rain which the heavenly Father sends, and the little child's part in the nurture of living and growing things.

May Day was a joyous celebration in the history of the folk with its maypole, its fairies and flowers. A remnant of this festive occasion to celebrate the full flowering of the spring we have kept in the making and hanging of May baskets. The Kindergarten child likes to make them and give them and, of course, he must talk about the whole performance.

Relative values.—Beginners who go to kindergarten in the day school talk frequently about the teachers and the activities there and make many interesting correlations with the Sunday-school material. They also bring a wealth of suggestion in songs, stories, verses, and games, some of which can be used while the rest has to be put aside because of lack of time for its use or lack of appro-

priateness. The children also make occasional remarks about the church or the minister and ask questions concerning religious problems or instruction which their parents may have given.

It is very evident in considering the variety of topics suggested that all contributions will not be of equal value. Many trivial remarks will be made, of interest only to the individual child, many incidental and novel experiences will be related of no particular educational value to the group, such as "My mamma has a new can-opener," "My brother's nose is crooked," "Our cat is funny," "Daddy lost his collar button." A wise teacher will not ignore any remark of the child who is sincere in trying to contribute. From many trifling statements she will be able by questioning to evolve something of value to the group, but in no instance will she waste the time of the group in continuing a discussion which has no religious significance and which does not interest the other children.

The teacher must know the universal interests of her group so well and the materials that connect with them that she can develop any good topic introduced by a child. She must keep the attainments to be gained through conversation clearly in mind, and her main objective in all of her work, which is to develop in the children a love for God and neighbor that shall evidence itself in their thinking, feeling, and acting. Neighbor is to be interpreted in the broadest sense to include every living thing in the child's environment—flowers, plants, insects, birds, animals, people.

For further discussion:

1. Does conversation have to be taught or is it a natural act? Explain.
2. Prepare in some detail an outline of topics which would be of worth and interest to the Beginners.
3. How should the teacher respond to an irrelevant or foolish remark made by a little child?
4. Illustrate from your own observation three values of conversation to the child.
5. Trace the beginnings of speech in the instinctive behavior of the infant.
6. What guides the teacher in selecting from the contributions of the children the topics for enlargement?

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CHAPTER VIII

THE TECHNIQUE OF CONVERSATION

Organization of the group.—The teacher's part in the organization and control of group conversation is most important if the children are to gain the values which have been suggested. The proper seating arrangement is no small item in the organization. Conversation may best take place in small groups of six or eight about the handwork tables, but there should be conversation during a rhythm, dramatization, or song period whatever the position of the children.

The most desirable arrangement for the whole group of perhaps thirty or more children for the discussion of topics interesting to all and of projects in which all have a part, is the seating informally about the teacher where there is a closer bond between the speakers than in the circle or half circle. The children must be cautioned not to crowd their chairs too close, for if they do, they will become irritated and quarrelsome through lack of space and in warm weather from the heat of many small bodies. All should be comfortably seated on chairs of the proper height with feet on the floor and backs resting against the support of the chair.

The first attempts to put hands on the other children or to annoy with feet should be promptly discouraged. This is one of the social problems

which can be discussed with the children themselves and for which they can make the proper rule. If a rug or carpet kept properly cleaned is available for use, the children may sit on it instead of upon chairs. The folding of the legs tailor fashion or at the side of the body has to be taught little children who have not been to kindergarten. Sitting on the floor provides the added temptation to lie down, to roll over or to slide; it also makes one's neighbor a little more available for poking and pulling, so that the problems of control are more difficult than when the children are seated on chairs.

If the children are keenly interested, the temptations for unseemly conduct of this kind are greatly lessened, but attention is easily diverted in these years and there are always two or three children in the group who are more interested in their immediate neighbors than in anything else. Sometimes changing the position of such a child so that he is removed from his best friend is a great help to him and to the group. The youngest children and those who are shortest should sit at the front, while the older and taller children can be near the back. If there are assistant teachers, they may take places around the outside of the group at a little distance from each other. At no time should they obstruct the view of the little child.

Incentive.—The incentive for a group conversation that will be of interest and value to all has to be provided by the teacher very frequently. Objects that have been brought in by the children furnish the stimulus if they are noticed by the teacher and thus brought to the attention of all

the children—for instance, Ann has her baby doll which she is delighted to show to the other children. Conversation about this doll ensues, then other children wish to tell about their dolls, and finally real babies are mentioned. If the teacher is skillful, she can see that the helpful aspects of doll play are stressed such as the right care of dolls and then of babies. Perhaps one or two lullabies will be sung and more conversation will take place concerning the ideas presented in them.

Not all the objects brought in by the children will be worth the time of the group unless the teacher feels that the little child in question should have the chance to express himself which this stimulus alone will provide. The objects that are brought by the children should be used early in the session or else put in a safe place until the children are ready to show them. Otherwise they will prove a continual distraction to the individual child and to those near him.

Then there are objects brought by the teacher, such as flowers, a pet visitor, pictures, leaves, shells, cocoons; all these are chosen appropriate to the season of the year or to the experience uppermost in the lives of a majority of the children. Because of the child's sense hunger there is a quick response, and after each child has had a chance to sense the object with eyes, ears, and hands if possible, conversation flows. Too many objects should not be introduced on a single morning, as confusion rather than clear ideas and images may result and excitement from overstimulation may accompany. Children always like to talk about what they have made. If, therefore, the teacher

holds up a few of their drawings or construction articles for comment or question, there will be interest and discussion.

A story is often followed by much worth-while conversation if the plot proves fascinating or the incident reminds the child of a similar experience of his own. Questions suggesting a problem to be solved such as "What shall we buy for the little Italian children with our money?" may elicit many suggestions. Questions merely requiring the answer "yes" or "no" should be used sparingly, as they invite the thoughtless reply often and sometimes the noisy chorus in response. Memory questions intended to stimulate the recall of certain facts, as, for instance, "What did we talk about last Sunday?" or "Who can tell where Moses lived?" are not very successful with Beginners because both rote and logical memory are weak at this age.

A particularly inartistic and often futile way to start conversation is to ask, "What shall we talk about this morning, children?" A blank expression very frequently passes over the faces of the children and they are mute. A social situation provides one of the best incentives where a wrong has been perpetrated or a rule broken or a gift is to be made or a party to be planned. There is usually a frank interchange of opinions and an excellent opportunity for self-expression and right social adjustment.

Opportunity.—Not only must the teacher often provide the incentive for conversation but she must give the opportunity for it. How many times we hear the teacher say to an eager group

of little children, "Now, don't talk, children," or "Listen to me; I have something to tell you"! The teacher is noted too frequently for her much "talking." Sometimes she is the soloist, as it were, and again we have a solo and a chorus of which the chorus is the minor and the solo the major part. Seldom enough do we find the true relationship where there is an orchestra and the teacher plays the first violin. Conversation to be of value must be a real interchange of ideas and feeling, and no such interchange can take place where the teacher employs the lecture method.

Social regulations.—There are certain social regulations which are essential to the success of a group conversation. As soon as the stimulus to converse occurs, many and sometimes all of the children in a Beginner group respond by talking, and there is a babble of sound in which nobody's contribution can be distinguished. The Kindergarten child has not been with so large a number of children before; he is impulsive and has little self-control so that he unconsciously talks when interested. The teacher must be patient and gentle in handling this situation, although once the rule has been made by the children that one child speak at a time, she must firmly hold to it and refuse to listen to the child who interrupts another. However, she must always expect that when a very strong stimulus comes, the children will forget and all "talk at once." They will quickly remember, however, if she employs some little signal like a note on the piano or closing her eyes, shaking her head or putting a finger on her lips.

The children themselves will readily perceive the

fairness and the necessity of taking turns in conversation as they do in games, and will suggest sending away from the group any child who persistently offends. The teacher should never say "Sh-sh-sh" in order to get silence nor should she clap her hands or shout at the children. Such devices antagonize and excite. The timid child and the new child should be treated with great care until they are acquainted and amalgamated, and should be given a chance to learn before the penalty is used.

The child must speak so as to be heard by the other children. If he stands by the teacher and faces the group, he can more easily have in mind this fact. It will help the child who speaks very softly if before he begins to speak the teacher reminds him of the child who sits farthest away. When the conversation is very informal and only short questions and statements are being made, it is unnecessary to have the child stand and face the others; but if his contribution is a long one or very valuable, he should do so. The teacher ought never to repeat what a child says except for the timid child who cannot speak so as to be heard and who becomes self-conscious and unhappy if the teacher insists on repetition of his remark by him. When many children want to speak, it is often necessary to use some device to find out who they are, like asking them to raise their hands or to stand, although usually the teacher can tell from the expression of the child's face and body that he wants to speak if he doesn't burst forth with a request.

Correction and guidance.—Many children make

errors in pronunciation and in grammar. The teacher need not notice these except to stress the correct form in her reply. If Johnnie says, "I seen a automobile in front of our house," the teacher may reply, "I *saw an* automobile and a wagon in front of your house when I came by for you." Correct example is nine tenths of the battle with these imitative little children, and criticism only serves to make them self-conscious, as they are not able to understand formal grammar. The child often uses the incorrect word or invents a word when he doesn't know the correct one, as did Mary who accused her teacher of having a "horseradish" voice. The teacher can easily in her next remark supply the right word, as "Yes, I am hoarse this morning."

The teacher through question and suggestion leads the little child on to complete the account of his experience or the plot of his story, as his remarks in the beginning are often quite fragmentary and would mean little to the group. If the children are solving a problem, the teacher is the one who must challenge them to criticize each suggestion as it is offered and to continue the discussion until they reach a conclusion satisfactory to all or at least one that can be tried out. Where each one in the group is contributing information that should build up a concept, ideal, standard, or plan of conduct, the teacher should see to it that the various threads are drawn together and the conclusion clear to all.

Too many times the conversation dies away or attention is distracted before a conclusion has been reached, and there is no sense of satisfaction such

as every child feels when the group is unified through a common idea or attitude. In such an event the objective for that particular conversation is never attained. If the teacher would be an artist in this delightful art of leading a conversation group, she must have great sympathy and insight, a ready fund of knowledge, and she will never laugh at the remark of a child, ridicule, ignore, or deceive one of the "least of these" who compose her circle.

Stenographic report.—The following stenographic report of an actual conversation which occurred in a Kindergarten group just before Thanksgiving illustrates how the teacher may provide incentive, allow opportunity, accept every contribution, and yet bring the children back to the question until valuable information has been secured and real feeling inspired.

Teacher: "I brought something to show you."

Children: "Don't tell us. It can be a s'prise."

Children: "It's rainin'."

Teacher: "I thought this morning when I came to school it was going to rain."

Howard: "An' it is too."

Isis: "I'm glad it's rainin' for the farmers. They need it to make the fruit and apples grow."

Teacher: "Isis says she is glad it's raining to make things grow for the farmers, and that is just what it is doing. You said 'cake,' Billy. Does the farmer give us cake?"

Children: "No, the baker makes cake."

Teacher: "What does he put in the cake?"

Children: "Dough." "Batter."

Teacher: "What goes into the dough?"

Children: "Flour."

Teacher: "Where does the baker get the flour?"

Children: "From the store."

Teacher: "And where does the store get it?"

Children: "From powder." "No, powder's what you put on your face to make you smell nice." "I put cold cream on myself." "I put soap on me."

Teacher: "No, flour comes from wheat and the wheat grows on the farm, so the farmer does give us the cake, and it's the rain that makes wheat grow. Nellie, over on the top of the cupboard you will find something wrapped up with a string around it."

Children: "I know what it is." "So do I."

Teacher: "No you don't. You haven't seen it."

Children: "A picture." "A book." "A slate."

Teacher: "All right. Now we will open it and see who guessed right. Isis, I'm waiting to see your eyes. When your eyes are looking at me, I will show you this. It's a picture." (Teacher shows picture of children saying "grace" at table.)

Children: "They're praying."

Teacher: "Don't let us say anything. Let's just look."

Children: "They're praying for their eats." "They're eating a piece of bread with butter on it."

Teacher: "Alice says that they are praying to God for their food. Now, why should they pray to God for their food?"

Children: " 'Cause they're hungry." " 'Cause he gives it to them."

Teacher: "What did he give them?"

Children: "Bread an' cake, an' lots of things." "An' oatmeal." "An' flowers and a bird." "And they're praying for dishes and chairs an' furniture." "Everything to make little people happy."

Teacher: "That's it just exactly: Howard says '*Everything* to make little people *happy!*' Now, let's see. You said 'house' and 'bird' and 'clothes' and 'flowers to look at' and 'new shoes' and 'something to eat'—God sends us all these but there's something you haven't told me. You could have everything you've told me and yet, if you didn't have this thing—"

Children: "Food?" "Money?" "Skin?" "House?"

Teacher: "It isn't anything to wear or eat."

Children: "The baby." "An' mother an' father?"

Teacher: "Yes. Mother and father and the baby. And why did he send you a mother and father?"

Children: "To take care of you." " 'Cause you might get killed on the street-car tracks and then she'd feel bad." "An' then she'd go in the bedroom and cry."

Teacher: "Well, but why? Why would she feel bad?"

Children: " 'Cause she let her little boy out." " 'Cause she wants you to go to the store for her —and mind the baby, and take the dishes off the table and put 'em in the kitchen."

Teacher: "Anton, why does your mother take care of you? Billy, why does your mother take care of you? Annette, why does your mother take care of you? Why does she put you in a nice, warm bed at night?"

Children: "She does it to make him happy."

Teacher: "Yes, do you know now what it is that makes everybody happy? You have it at your house and I have it at mine. Now, why does God give us everything?"

Children: " 'Cause we'd starve." "No, 'cause he likes us."

Teacher: "Yes, because he loves us, and that is what we have in every home that makes us happy —love. Do you remember the word we learned yesterday?"

Children: "Thanksgiving."

Teacher: "Yes, that's it. Now, do you know why we have Thanksgiving?"

Children: "To pray to God and thank him for the things he gives us." "The nice heat." "For coal down in basement."

Teacher: "Margaret isn't here this week, and when she comes back will you tell her what the picture means?"

Isis: "Put it up on the wall and when she sees it, I'll say, 'Thank God for all these things he sends to little children.' "

For further discussion:

1. What may be the cause or causes where children annoy each other during a group conversation? How would you handle the situation?
2. How much talking should the teacher do?
3. Why does the teacher often need to provide an incentive for group conversation? How may she do this?
4. What is the danger in laughing at or ridiculing the remark of a child?
5. Why is the question answered by "yes" or "no" usually a poor one? How would you criticize the question, "What shall we talk about this morning?" or the question, "What did we talk about last week?"
6. What would you do with the child who continually interrupts? with the one who cannot be heard?

7. Tell how the teacher may guide a group conversation to a satisfactory conclusion.

8. What should be the teacher's response when Roger says, "I *seen* a horse"?

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CHAPTER IX

THE BASIS FOR PRAYER IN CHILD THOUGHT AND FEELING

PRAYER is communion with God, an extension of conversation to include the Unseen Father. It is as real an attempt to communicate with him, to express thought, feeling, desire to One who understands supremely the needs of the individual as is any conversation with a human friend. A mere chanting of words, meaningless and monotonous, is not prayer. Therefore before the child can really pray he must feel God and he must love and believe in him.

DEVELOPMENT OF A LOVE FOR GOD

Human love.—The young child is naturally dependent and trusting. Like a magnet he seems to draw love and sympathy, and he thrives upon it. In the beginning he does not love even his mother, but very soon her constant care, the tenderness with which she holds him, the gentle pressure of her body against his, the caressing tone in her voice when she speaks to him, stimulate in him a desire for her presence which he manifests by reaching out his hands to her, by cooing and smiling when she draws near, and by frowning and crying when she withdraws. Gradually this preference deepens into a feeling of love which in time is

expressed not only by the caress of little hands and moist lips but by the words, "I love you."

The wise mother will not permit the expression to cease here but will give the eager little lover much that he can do to help her. In other words, she will let love learn to express itself in service. In like manner the child comes to love all of those in the home who minister to his comfort or his pleasure—father, brother, aunt, and grandmother, and as he grows older a constantly enlarging circle of friends, big and little, who contribute to his happiness.

In the beginning physical comforts—food, bath, sleep, clothes—are the *summum bonum*, and these are the gifts which arouse his love and gratitude, but later the one who understands him best, who appreciates his efforts, who gives him opportunities to grow, who plays with him and reads and sings to him, who in other words meets the needs of the developing personality which inhabits the body—this is the one who may count on his fullest devotion. Farsighted is the mother who takes time to be such a companion to her child as well as a provider of physical care. A certain teacher remembers with a heartache a little child who after a morning of joyous play and perfect understanding, looked up into her face with inexpressible longing and said, "I wish you wuz my mother!"

Divine love.—By the same process of feeling as we have just described, love for God and gratitude to him must be developed before real prayer can eventuate. If the child has lived in a religious home, he has heard the voice of prayer and felt the tone of reverence in it long before he observed

the kneeling figure or understood the words that were uttered. Gradually he notes every detail of the bodily expression—the folded hands, the bowed head, the closed eyes—and he imitates the position perfectly as well as the attitude of devotion. He still may not understand the meaning of the prayer, but through suggestion and imitation he feels God.

Very early the child distinguishes the word "God" or the term "heavenly Father" as it is repeated day after day in the prayer at night and in the blessing at table; and later he comes to understand that father and mother are saying thanks and asking for help. He is told that God gives the flowers, the birds, the rabbit, and the sunshine. Very gradually he builds up the concept of a great Father God who fulfills his need of protection and care when father and mother are not near.

DEVELOPMENT OF AN UNDERSTANDING OF GOD

Questions.—At four or earlier he begins to ask questions about God. "What do you really know about God?" one four-year-old asked his father, and, minister though he was, this searching question gave the father more trouble than all the queries of the congregation. To the many questions about what God is like, why he cannot be seen, where he is, and how we know he loves us, the teacher or parent can only answer each one in language that the child can understand, seeking to align the statement with his own belief but to use familiar experiences as a means of interpreting for the child.

Experience with the wind helps the child to sense the meaning of unseen. A group of kinder-

garten children on a certain morning had gone to the window to watch the wind blowing objects and to feel it on their own faces. The teacher asked, "Could you catch the wind?"

The children laughingly replied, "No." And one child added, "And you can't see it either."

"Say," said another, "you have wind in you."

After some discussion everybody identified "the wind in you" as breath, and later it was very easy for the teacher to get ready comprehension when she said, "God, like the wind, cannot be seen, but we feel him." To the child who asked how she could know that God loved her when she couldn't see him or hear him speak, one wise teacher replied, "When I am at my house and you are at your house, do you think that I love you?"

"Yes," said the child.

"Well," said the teacher, "how do you know that when you can't see me or hear me or touch me?"

"I just know it," said the little girl.

"And that is exactly the way it is about God's love. We know that he loves us because we feel his love," said the teacher.

Questions that we cannot answer because we do not know ourselves should be frankly answered by a confession of our limited knowledge or a promise to help the child find out. It is good for the child occasionally to sense the great mysteries which have always challenged the search of the eager human spirit. It develops wonder and reverence for the great Unseen Power who has so marvelously wrought.

Experiences with nature and man.—One morning in a Beginners' Department the children had

been discussing the moon and the stars; the question had been asked and answered concerning who made them. Stephen looked up in the teacher's face with a puzzled expression. "But the thing I want to know," he said, "is how God makes them stay there." The teacher explained as simply as she could that each star had its own path and that there was a wonderful force that kept them all in their own places. "Stephen, as you grow older you will learn more about this plan of God's. People have been studying it for years and years and years and no one knows all that he would like to know yet." Stephen was satisfied for the moment, but the wonder of discovery gleamed in his eyes as he contemplated the future investigations that he would make.

Someone has well said: "It is our business to tie the consciousness of a personal God to the child's world of experience so that day and night, sun, moon, and stars, sunrise and sunset, storm and rain, trees and flowers, parents, relatives, and friends, will all pull the God idea into consciousness by the laws of psychic association. When you have done this, you have preempted the child for God, and his whole life will be lived in the presence of his God; he will live, move, and have his being in God."[1]

Mistakes in forming concepts.—It is more necessary, however, that we help the child to form the right conclusions about God than that we develop a concept of God. A God of cruel power who with his dreadful thunderbolt strikes down offending

[1] *The Religious Nurture of a Little Child*, by F. W. Langford. Reprinted by permission of The Abingdon Press, publishers.

children; a God of narrow prejudice who favors our country, our city, and our home above other countries, other cities, and other homes; a God who loves the white child but not the black; a God who is present in the Presbyterian church and not in the Baptist; a God who accepts promises in the place of deeds, a God who is a magic for getting presents—all of these ideas of God are typical of mistakes made in the past in developing a concept of the true God. Some of them have made the child to fear his God, to shudder at the mention of his name, to hide away from his presence, and to cast him at last out of the life when reason has fully dawned.

Certain ideas have developed a monstrous egotism and an insufferable snobbishness toward other races, other churches, and other nations. Others have made the child a sentimental pretender, professing his God in words but not in deeds, using his name as a shibboleth by which to get his own way. Mary, aged five, had run away to play at a neighbor's house while her mother was down town, although she had been told to stay at home until her mother's return.

"Mary, why did you go away when you knew that I didn't want you to?" asked the mother that evening.

"Oh," said Mary, "I asked God about it after you left, and he said for me to go."

Perhaps the most prevalent misconception is that of God as a glorified Santa Claus, who doles out gifts all the year round; the child becomes a perennial beggar, asking for impossible benefits and in the end losing faith in God and in prayer because

his requests are not granted. These wrong conclusions about God are partly the result of faulty instruction, of failure to answer the child's questions as he asks eagerly for more information about God, thus leaving him to his own superstitions and imaginings, and partly the result of the patterns which older people set for this suggestible little imitator. The adult conversations, the way in which foreigners, strangers, members of other churches are treated, the attitudes toward God and prayer, and, more subtle yet, the emotions of the grown-ups—all of these make their indelible impressions upon the eager learner and are consciously or unconsciously translated into the web of faith which he is weaving.

Desirable concept.—On the other hand a God of love, the Father of all little children, the Friend of all the peoples of the earth, who in his wisdom gives us good gifts as he sees our real need, who is never weary in well-doing and who expects us to be like him, is not only a God whom the child learns to know through instruction, but much more a God whom he senses at work in the lives of his parents and teachers. A child whose earthly father never denies him anything for which he asks and who overlooks all of his misdeeds with a blandishing smile, will find it hard to conceive of a heavenly Father who refuses favors and who says, "By their works ye shall know them."

The Kindergarten child is naturally dependent and trusting. He readily believes in God; he readily trusts his neighbor. To lead him through misplaced confidence, idle gossip or sad experience to lose his faith in either is not only a violation

of his nature but a tragedy for his future religious growth because he is not at the age when he can reason upon the whys and wherefores of human frailty or Divine Providence. He therefore acquires an attitude of distrust and suspicion very difficult to eradicate later.

The God of the Beginner is always a personal God because the Beginner is very much of an individualist; his aches and his pains, his joys and his pleasures are supremely important, and for all of these his God cares. Little Marion, aged three, restrained her tears while the alcohol was rubbed upon her bruises. "I mustn't cry," she said, "God is taking care of me." Another little child when she cut her finger, called loudly for the doctor. When her mother told her that they couldn't call him because they were away at camp, she said immediately, "Then call God, call God!" Morton, barely six, remarked one day with joyful pride, "I have three fathers—God, daddy, and who's that other fellow up in Boston?—oh, yes, Grandpa Morton."

The result.—When the child has developed such a concept of God as a loving, All-Wise, Wonder-Working Father who has "numbered each hair of the head and who notes every sparrow's fall," he will without fail offer to God, as he does to his mother and father, love and gratitude. It is then the most natural thing in the world for him to talk to God; prayer becomes the spontaneous outpouring of the heart as well as the phraseology of the intellect. "We have forgotten to thank God this morning," said Teddy, reprovingly, one Sunday to the teacher who had postponed prayer because

of a very exciting arrival. When the teacher asked quickly, "Shall we speak to him now?" every little head bowed assent.

A certain mother said to a teacher who had developed the prayer spirit in her group as we have suggested here: "My child is a constant surprise to his father and me; often he will speak of God during the day or pause in his play to pray to him. When we were children we had no such feeling of the nearness of God or of his interest in us, and even now we cannot pray readily as Paul does."

DEVELOPMENT OF LOVE FOR JESUS

What to stress.—The development of a love for Jesus takes place in a similar way. The child early hears his name mentioned in the home; he catches the love, the respect, the reverence in the tone. Perhaps the first Bible story that is told him, is the one of the coming of the infant Christ, very short and very simple with some one of the Nativity pictures as the illustration. The story says that God sent this wonderful baby to Mary to care for until he is grown, and then he will tell everybody of the love of God the Father. The child hears other stories about the child Jesus and the boy Jesus, and he watches this baby grow after the fashion of all babies. By and by Jesus is a man, and he goes about doing good, showing us how God would have us help everybody if we love him. Jesus loves little children, he takes them in his arms and blesses them. Little children love Jesus; they follow after him and give him flowers. He tells stories that children like to hear about the "little lost lamb," and "the good shepherd."

What to omit.—The incidents of the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord are too difficult for the kindergarten child to understand and should be withheld until a later period. A little boy burst into a happy kindergarten group one sunny Easter morning with the statement: "They killed Jesus. Some bad men did it. They hung him on a cross." It is impossible to describe the change in the faces of the happy children as they turned with one accord to the teacher. "Did they? Did they kill Jesus?" "Yes," said the teacher, "there were some men who did not love him and who did not wish to hear the words that he said. They did not really know what they were doing when they hurt him." Then there came from that little group a chorus of, "I love him! I love him!"—a testimony to the love which had been developed by the careful months of teaching. The teacher continued her explanation to include the fact that Jesus was no longer dead, that he was living with God, the heavenly Father.

An illustration.—Another time in this same department the following spontaneous conversation took place after the story of "Jesus blessing little children" had been told:

Mary: "Jesus is in heaven."

John: "How did he get there?"

Jeannette: "He had wings."

Robert: "He flew in an aeroplane."

Dorothy: "No, I think there was a ladder."

Teddy: "He died."

Edwin: "God lifted him up."

Teacher: "You think that he rose, Edwin, as the clouds float up in the sky."

Edwin: "Yes."

Harriet: "God is everywhere."

Teacher: "Yes, he is everywhere."

Betty: "He takes care of us in the morning, at noon, and at night, so we don't get hurt."

Teacher: "Yes, I think he does help us sometimes to be careful so we don't get hurt, and sometimes when we are hurt he comforts us with his love just as mother does."

Esther: "God doesn't love us when we are bad."

Teacher (questioningly): "Doesn't God love us when we are naughty?"

Marion: "Yes, he always likes us. He helps us to be good."

Teacher: "What is it that God doesn't like?"

Children: "Naughty, bad things we do."

Teacher: "You are right. God doesn't like the bad things we do sometimes, but he always loves us."

For further discussion:

1. What is prayer? How is it related to the body of literature in the prayer book?
2. What must happen in the experience of any little child before real prayer can take place?
3. Compare the development of human love and love for God.
4. How would you answer the question, "Where is God?" the question, "Who made God?"
5. What are some of the wrong concepts concerning God that little children have formed? Why have they made these mistakes?
6. What kind of a concept of God does the Beginner teacher seek to have the child form? What should naturally follow the development of such a concept?

7. Make a list of the stories from the life of Jesus that a kindergarten child can understand and that will awaken love upon his part.

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CHAPTER X

THE ART OF PRAYING WITH BEGINNERS

When the child has come to know and love God, the preparation for spontaneous prayer has been made. The expression, however, is much later with some children than with others. The imaginative, expressive child may begin to pray spontaneously at three or four, while his more stolid, prosaic brother may wait until six or seven. Some children are capable of great religious feeling before they are able to formulate it in words. This fact is especially true of the shy child. The child should never be forced to pray, as such a procedure will make him dislike prayer, thus defeating the prayer habit. Forced prayers are meaningless too and therefore a waste of time.

The parent's responsibility.—A regular time for prayer, when father or mother prays with or for the child until he is able and ready to pray for himself, is an excellent plan, for it sets the prayer habit and unconsciously the child comes to look forward to those few, quiet, reverent moments every day. The prayer should always be very short and it should be personal that the child may imbibe the idea that prayer is real communion. There are occasions when the parent is justified in omitting the customary prayer if the little child is ill or very fatigued. A conscientious parent

struggled one night for an hour with a four-year-old who was far from well, trying to force her to kneel and say her usual prayer verse. He was finally compelled to give up, but not until the child was in hysterics, a fact which had no small bearing upon the serious illness which followed.

The teacher's responsibility.—The teacher in the Beginners' Department has many little children who have never heard a spontaneous prayer until they come to her, some who do not know or love God or who have wrong impressions about him, and others who are very shy about praying where there are several people present. She must therefore begin at the beginning and spend time every Sunday in enlarging the true concept of God and in developing real feeling for him. She should never omit prayer, and in addition to the little verse which she has perhaps selected as a prayer, or as a substitute for it, she should always formulate a prayer for her particular group of children stressing their needs and blessings. Gradually she may expect them to join her and to offer suggestions for the prayer which in time will become a real expression for all of the group.

TYPES OF PRAYER

Petition.—There are certain aspects or types of prayer that need especial consideration. There is, first of all, the prayer of petition, more frequently used by the child than any other. Little Mary's first approach to spontaneous prayer happened at three and a half.

Mary: "Why can't I go out to play?"

Mother: "Because it is snowing."

Mary: "Where does the snow come from?"
Mother: "From the sky."
Mary: "Who sends it?"
Mother: "God."
Mary: "Then I think I write a letter to God and tell him I wants it to stop snowing so I can go out to play."

Elizabeth was five when she added her first line to the familiar "Now I lay me." It was: "Please, God, don't let me have any bad dreams, don't let me have any good dreams." Allen was four when one night, after watching a chain gang in the street, he prayed, "Please God, let me work in the street like dem mens, and give me a striped suit like theirs and a ball and chain on my feets." Bovard at five had tried and tried to make a snow shovel. At last he stopped, closed his eyes, and said very earnestly, "Please, God, make a snow shovel."

There is one great danger which is inherent in many of such prayers of petition—the child has too literal an expectation of fulfillment.

"I don't think I will pray any more," said one small girl.

"Why not?" asked her father, anxiously.

"Oh, it doesn't do any good. I've prayed and prayed for God to make grandmother better, and she gets worse."

To counteract this danger it is well from the beginning to have the child understand that he can ask God to do for him but that God, like daddy or mother, will have to decide what is best. It is the spirit of the Master's prayer that we want him to catch from the beginning, "Not my will, but thine be done."

There is danger even in the prayer of petition which asks God to make the child good or strong or honest or happy, danger that the child will expect God to do the work and cease all effort on his own account. Little Betty, aged six, showed that she had learned the lesson involved here when she said, "If you make a garden and forget to water it and tend it, God doesn't take care of it for you." A little child of whom Edith Read Mumford writes had also mastered this problem: "When you ask God to help you do anything, you have to try your hardest yourself, then he does the last little bit you can't manage. If he did it all, it would be spoilings."

Intercession.—Another type of prayer is that of intercession, petition for others. When Catherine was four years of age and Dorothy Ann was two and a half, Dorothy Ann discovered one night that she had left a precious book downstairs. Catherine urged her to go and get it but Dorothy Ann said, "I can't go; I must say my prayers to God." Then Catherine said, "You go, Dorothy Ann, and I will say your prayers for you." And she immediately began, "Please, God, make my sister a good girl, and take care of daddy and mother." A Beginner group formulated from several suggestions the following prayer for the birthday child one Sunday morning: "Please, God, make Billy good. Don't let him tease little girls. Don't let him run in front of autos. Give him a new suit."

The intercessory prayer is open to the dangers of the petition prayer for self, and the same cautions must be observed if faith and effort are not to suffer shipwreck at some point. The prayer of

intercession, however, is more social and less individualistic, and it does give expression to broadening sympathy and understanding of others' needs. To encourage it the teacher or parent needs to give many suggestions and much information about the condition of others for whom the child may pray.

Thanksgiving.—The prayer of thanksgiving has no dangers, and the feeling and expression of gratitude fill the life with a sense of enrichment and contentment. Nothing will do more to open the eyes to the goodness of God and his children than the habit of thanking him in the morning and at night as well as at the family table for each day's blessings. John was four when he really appreciated a snowstorm; that night he prayed, "I thank you, God, for daddy and the snow." Little Monica, also four, found two little baby kittens under the porch one day. She looked at them a long while, then taking them very gently in her hands, she held them toward the sky and said, "Heavenly Father, I thank you for my kittens." Betty at five watched her father care tenderly for her mother during a serious illness. When the mother recovered, Betty fell ill with the same malady and the mother cared for her. After Betty was well again, she prayed, "Dear God, thank daddy for taking care of mama, and thank mama for taking care of me, and thank you for taking care of all of us."

Junior was about five and a half when he said one night as he and his sister Jean were preparing to say their prayers, "Now don't laugh, Jean; I have a new prayer of my own to say." He then prayed: "Dear heavenly Father, thank you for letting my mother come home from the hospital.

Thank you for keeping Jean safe when she crossed the streets. Thank you for letting our daddy earn dollars for us, and thank you for taking care of me." A group one Sunday morning responded to the teacher's question as to what they would like to thank God for, by giving the following list: "Thank him for the roses. Thank him for the sunshine. Thank him for my pink dress. For my new shoes. For our baby. For my birthday." The teacher carefully included each item in the prayer of thanksgiving and the children's voices trailed reverently after hers.

Form.—There are, of course, beautiful form prayers for children embodying petition, intercession, and thanksgiving of which the following are typical of verses well adapted to the Beginner:

"Thanks to our Father we will bring,
For he gives us everything."
—Robert Louis Stevenson.

"Now I wake and see the light;
God has kept me through the night.
I will lift my eyes and pray,
Father, keep me through the day."
—New England Primer—Adapted.

"Heavenly Father, wilt thou hear me?
Bless thy little child to-night;
Through the darkness be thou near me;
Keep me safe till morning light."
—Mary Lundie Duncan—Adapted.

The danger in the form prayer is that the child may not hear the words correctly and that he may also not understand the meaning. If all prayers

are form, the child may never comprehend prayer as communion with God in which he can express his own needs, desires, and gratitude. When the prayer does have meaning for him at the beginning, it is often repeated until he says it like a chant without thought or reverence. The Lord's Prayer, the most wonderful prayer ever uttered for the adult, is not a child's prayer, especially not a little child's prayer, as will readily be admitted if it is analyzed phrase by phrase. It has no meaning for the child because of the difficult phraseology and the content lying back of the words. The prayer repeated at night by countless thousands of children,

> "Now I lay me down to sleep,
> I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
> If I should die before I wake,
> I pray the Lord my soul to take,"

is also too difficult for the kindergarten child; he does not understand the meaning of "to keep" or "to take" the soul. The word "die" often frightens him.

One little lad at three and a half would repeat the first two lines, and then beg, "I don't want to die, don't make me say it." A young woman says that she never will forget the fear which that prayer brought into her childhood. Every night she would say it as fast as possible like one swallows bad medicine, and then she would pray her own heart-felt prayer, "Please don't take my soul even if I did ask you to, God." The following prayer is one of many substitutes offered:

"Now I lay me down to rest,
Angels guard my little nest.
Like the wee birds on the tree,
Heavenly Father, care for me."

The value of the form prayer is its beautiful phraseology and its suggestive content. It sometimes stimulates a lovely poetic expression from a child, as was true of little Elsie who prayed one morning in kindergarten,

"God is good,
God is kind,
Thank you for the birds that sing,
Thank you God for everything."

TECHNIQUE OF THE PRAYER GROUP

Discovery of need or gratitude.—The art of praying with the little child alone or of leading a group in prayer has its own technique. The mother in the morning or bedtime talk must discover the need or gratitude of the child and help him to express it either in his own words or in hers. The teacher with the group has the same responsibility. There are certain desires, needs, joys common to all of the children on a Sunday morning, and there are others which pertain just to the individual child. Very often he is greatly helped by having these included in the group prayer and the rest of the children are rendered sympathetic and unselfish by participating in the expression. There are also needs entirely outside the Sunday-school group; there are children or a child in some mission or hospital or Home in which the group is interested and whom they should never forget

when they pray. It is long, however, from Sunday to Sunday, and sympathy needs to be aroused afresh and deepened by new incidents.

The creating of atmosphere.—When the moment for prayer arrives, the right atmosphere must be created. Children cannot make the transition from a merry romp to instant prayer without some preparation, or even from an interesting conversation or a joyous march. Without reverence there is no worship, and an atmosphere of hilarity or merely of curiosity will not conduce to real prayer.

There are several devices that may be used in creating the mood: devotional music played for a minute or two, a story told in a reverent tone, a hymn or lullaby sung softly by the children, a little verse repeated together—anyone of these may be used as best suits the need of the occasion. Always shere will be a few words from the teacher, spoken tlowly, in a quiet, reverent tone, stressing the theme of the prayer, and then asking that the heads be bowed, the eyes closed, and the hands clasped or folded—as: "Shall we thank God now for all the gifts that you have suggested? Each one may speak to him about that for which he is most glad. It doesn't matter if we do not say the same words. God can hear each one of us. Now let us close our eyes and fold our hands."

The position of the body.—The bodily conformity does intensify the reverence quite as much as the feeling tends to produce the bodily expression. It seems best not to ask little children to kneel as the kneeling position on the hard wood floor is often uncomfortable and tends to distract the child's attention. It is well, however, to rise for

the prayer and to call the children close to the teacher, as nearness helps to make her own reverence felt.

If the preparation has been carefully made, there will seldom be any irreverence, but should one or more children disturb by laughing, whispering, or using loud voices, or moving about the teacher should stop instantly. The first time she should reprove the child gently, explaining very seriously that no one ever disturbs in prayer. The second time the same child interrupts he should be asked to go away from the group until the prayer is finished, either into an adjoining room or to the hall. This separation should take place kindly but with the idea that the rest of the group cannot be interrupted by one little child.

Self-expression respected.—No child should be forced to take part in the prayer. If he wishes to watch the others with wide open eyes, as many children will do for some weeks, no especial attention should be paid to him unless he disturbs the others who want to pray. The prayer should be very brief, not over a minute or two for Beginners, but quiet should be maintained until every little child has concluded. Some will be praying their own prayers, others will be following the teacher, possibly a line or phrase behind. If a form prayer is used, it should be changed from time to time to keep the interest vivid; it should also be carefully presented before it is first repeated, to be sure that a point of contact is made with the children's experience and that they understand every word.

The teacher's attitude.—No possible substitute in technique can, however, compensate for real

faith and sincere devotion on the teacher's part as she prays. Her eyes must be closed, her hands clasped, her voice must express the spirit of worship which she deeply feels. She conveys through suggestion her consciousness of the presence of God to the waiting group, and the room becomes for the moment the holy of holies.

For further discussion:

1. Would you force a little child to say his "prayers"? Give reason for your answer.
2. Where must the teacher begin in laying foundations for prayer?
3. Show clearly the danger in the prayer of petition; in the form prayer.
4. Criticize the use of the Lord's Prayer with a group of kindergarten children. Would you use the familiar child's prayer, "Now I lay me"?
5. What are the values in religious experience of prayers of intercession and thanksgiving?
6. How may the teacher discover what a group of children need or what they are most grateful for?
7. What should be said to the child who disturbs the prayer of others?
8. In what ways may the teacher create the right atmosphere for prayer?
9. Show how the teacher's attitude will affect the group.

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CHAPTER XI

THE STORY

As long ago as 800 B. C., the record runs, there was story-telling of the highest art, for it was then that the tales of Homer were first told—the faithlessness of Helen and the destruction of Troy, the wanderings of the hapless Ulysses 'mid Sirens and Cyclops, 'twixt Scylla and Charybdis, began then to be sung and are still singing down the ages, immortal tales!

But Homer was not the first story-teller. It is quite probable that the first man told stories of his prowess to the first woman, and that the woman told them to her little brown-skinned babies; and the art has not yet perished from the earth, for the most civilized fathers tell tales of their adventures in the world of industry and commerce to mothers in the twentieth century, and both fathers and mothers tell tales, old and new, to their children.

Native interest.—This native interest in telling stories is based in the instinctive nature, upon communication and dramatic imitation. In every group there is a story-teller, whether an Indian brave reciting in low, guttural chant the tale of the chase, or the village gossip relating the latest scandal, or the little child telling of the fire in the next block. Given a story with the proper dramatic elements, and even the shy and taciturn will wax bold and voluble enough to tell it.

In primitive audiences and audiences of children every member of the group participates by clapping or laughing or shouting some appropriate monosyllable on climactic or repetitive phrases, as "u-la-la," "ha-ha-ha," "tum-ta-tum-too-tum-ta," "hey-o-the-dairy-o," and the like. Every child and every adult possesses in embryo at least the possibilities of a story-teller if he will but feel his tale and practice his art. Only those who have repressed emotion until faces, bodies, and voices have become graven and cold, and life has ceased to flow warm and vibrant at the touch of a real tale, have lost their chances to qualify as true artists in this field.

AIMS IN TELLING

Pleasure and the story.—Not only is every one of us by nature a story-teller, but everyone as well enjoys listening to a story. Audiences of grown-ups are no exception to this rule, as the eloquent preacher, orator, and stump politician will testify. That greatest of all teachers and preachers, the Master of Galilee, was a consummate story-teller; no one has yet evolved a moral plummet which has sounded the depths of meaning in his simple parables. The interest of a child in a story, however, exceeds that of any adult in its spontaneous eagerness and its unconscious credulity. No grown-up equals his enthusiasm as he begs for "a story" and then "another" and "just one more" until the repertoire of the teller is quite exhausted or the dinner bell rings.

The joy of the child is sufficient excuse for telling stories, if one were needed, and sufficient reward for any sacrifices of preparation that the teacher

may make, for to lift a cup of "Simon-pure" happiness to the lips of a child is a rare privilege for any man or woman. In these days of trashy movies and cheap jazz, of Coney Island and the "White City," it is doubly necessary that the art of story-telling be part of a substitute program for wholesome recreation. In all that may be said hereafter of the aims of story-telling, let it not be forgotten that the first aim is to give pleasure. A story which does not do that is a cheat and leaves its expectant little audience unsatisfied, for a story is "not an argument or an explanation, not a description, nor a lecture in disguise, but a narrative which appeals to the imagination, interest, emotion more than to intellect."

Information in the story.—Stanley Hall once said: "Let me tell stories. I care not who writes textbooks." Waiting for each syllable, as it falls from the lips of the story-teller, the child adds words to his vocabulary, images to his picture gallery, ideas to his store of concepts. He learns of kings and princes, of peasants and knaves, who lived many centuries ago, as well as of present-day aristocrats and democrats. He is familiar with castles and mansions, with forts and jails, with cathedrals and meetinghouses, in the long succession of emperors, soldiers, and priests that fill the pages of time.

Children of other countries, black and red, yellow and pale-face, strange customs and foreign manners all become "part of him," to be understood and correctly interpreted when chanced upon in his real world. Vicariously, but none the less effectively, the experiences of others are shared,

LISTENING TO A STORY

appropriated, classified as part and parcel of his own fund of experience. Nothing else can give so broad a preparation for world brotherhood later as the story thus used in childhood.

Emotional expression.—The imagination is marvelously stimulated through the imagery of the story. Fairies and elves, giants and gnomes, wishing carpets and magic boxes, hidden treasures and winged steeds furnish a world of make-believe, where the child, like the folk, visions the conquests of nature, the transformation of material things to meet the needs of the spirit of man. Long before the telegraph, the telephone, or the radio were invented fairy-lore told of calls heard 'round the world. The story helps the child to create an unseen, spiritual kingdom, which shall prevent the prison house of the flesh ever shutting out the light of the eternal.

The story, in its varied phases, stimulates the sense of humor, so essential to mental health and charity, inspires love, sympathy, wholesome indignation at wrongdoing, and reverence for goodness and greatness. Such emotional experiences crystallize in time into permanent appreciations and attitudes that motivate conduct. The story of the baby Moses never fails to elicit indignation at the cruel king, sympathy for the mother and sister, and love for the baby Moses, gratitude to the princess, reverence for the goodness of God, who overruled evil that good might come. If the kindergarten child hears that story often, the story also of the infant Samuel, and those that center around the childhood of Jesus, he will develop an appreciation of the devoted care of mothers and an

attitude of love for little babies, which will show in his treatment of his own mother and baby, especially if the teacher helps him to make the application definite in conduct.

From stories containing moral lessons, too, the child gleans ideals and standards of conduct. He feels morality before he ever formulates such maxims as "Honesty is the best policy," "Unselfishness brings happiness," "It pays to tell the truth," "Courage is rewarded."

QUALITIES OF THE GOOD STORY

The plot.—The story must be, first of all, a story, not an argument or a description, or a sermon, but a narrative of incidents having a unified plot and leading up to a well-defined climax. For the little child of four or five, it must be short—a brief but interest-compelling beginning, which serves to introduce the actors and the theme; a lively narration of events with just enough description to make the action understandable; a climax that is positive and clearly solves the problem of the plot; and a very brief conclusion just long enough to get the hero home and the rejoicing relatives in the foreground.

In the story of the lost lamb a sufficient introduction is found in the single sentence, "Once upon a time there was a good shepherd who had a hundred sheep." Then follows the narrative of events, which includes the trip of the sheep to the pasture, the breaking of the storm, the return to the fold, the discovery of the loss of the lamb, and the search of the shepherd. The climax is the point at which the lamb is found; and the conclusion covers the

return of the shepherd to the fold, the care of the lamb, and the call of the other shepherds to rejoice.

Character of content.—Stories for Beginners should not, as a rule, occupy more than five minutes in the telling. The major characters should be introduced early and there should be few of them—three to six are quite as many as the child can follow. The story should contain very little description and no irrelevant details. As soon as action flags the child's interest tends to wander.

The element of repetition found in Mother Goose and the popular folk and fairy tales is much enjoyed, as "I am a gingerbread boy, I am, I am," or "Cock-a-doodle-doo, my dame has lost her shoe." Such repetition should be considered, both in selecting and in telling the story. There should be a point of contact in the experience of the child, an appeal that has a pull for him. Stories about himself, other children, babies, animals, and people who do things that he can appreciate, such as firemen, sailors, carpenters, and farmers, are most likely to interest. There should also be at this age enough of the unfamiliar to stimulate imagination and increase ideas.

Nature of ending.—The story for the child should always have a positive ending. Good conduct must be rewarded and bad conduct punished. The wicked fairy's wish is frustrated, and the lovely princess awakes ten times more beautiful than before. A lion and a bear attack the sheep in David's care, but David kills the lion and the bear, and the sheep are saved. Herod sought the young child's life to destroy it, but the angel of

the Lord saved the Christ-baby and he returned to Nazareth after Herod's death.

Such a procedure is essential because the child is very objective. He cannot see spiritual success unless it is made concrete in material gains. He can neither stand the suspense in a deferred solution nor can he help being confused in his sense of values if evil seems to win. What works is moral at five, and what doesn't work is immoral. It is most important that goodness carry the stamp of success.

CLASSIFICATION TYPES

Under the various classifications of stories those best adapted to use in the Beginners' Department are the realistic story; the nature story, which is a form of realistic story; the folk tale; the modern fanciful tale; the verse which is narrative or vivid with concrete pictures; and the Bible story. The realistic story includes incidents which have taken place or might have taken place. It is the possible, in contrast to the impossible in the fairy tale, ancient or modern.

Realistic and fanciful stories.—Four- and five-year-old children like best of all the realistic story about themselves and their own experiences or about other people in similar experiences. They need many such stories to orient themselves with the real and very marvelous world which they are seeing, hearing, touching for the first time. The elements and phenomena of nature, human relationships in the family and the neighborhood, flowers and plants, animals and insects, provide unlimited material for stories of absorbing charm.

Moreover, such stories help the child to develop the attitudes and appreciations, the ideals and standards needed in his daily living because the home setting gives the direct application. Every wonder of nature, from the rising sun to the evening star, offers story possibilities through which reverence and love for creation may be developed. There are a few folk and fanciful tales, containing a truth or an ideal which can be comprehended by the child and which will help him in his moral, social growth and in his search after God, as, for instance, "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" or "The Caterpillar and the Butterfly."

The Bible story.—For leading the child to his God, however, there are no stories like the Bible stories. They are literally saturated with God and the consciousness of his presence is as inevitably impressed upon the listener as the sunlight on his vision. The wonder and faith of the child mind are in these Old Testament stories, the rudimentary morals of a child race, and a simple, but beautiful imagery and intensity of feeling never excelled.

Not all the Bible stories are suitable for kindergarten children; in fact, only a few can be used with success—chiefly the story of the creation, some of the stories of the patriarchs, judges and prophets, and some scenes from the life of Jesus. All stories need to be somewhat adapted in language and setting to afford sufficient of the familiar to make the story understandable.

Certain stories, like "The Baby Moses," "The Birth of the Christ-child," "The Angels and Shepherds," "The Lost Lamb," will bear constant repetition, while at each telling the tale grows dearer and the impression deeper.

For further discussion:

1. How do you account for the interest in story-telling?
2. What should be the first aim of the story-teller?
3. Select a story and analyze it to show the information which the child will glean from it.
4. How may stories lay the foundation for world brotherhood later?
5. Of what value is it to stimulate the imagination through the story? The sense of humor, sympathy, reverence?
6. Cite a story which will give the child the "feel of unselfish service."
7. Enumerate five qualities of a good story. Why must the story for the little child have a positive ending?
8. Distinguish between the fanciful and the realistic story. What is the outstanding value of the realistic story? of the Bible story?
9. Name ten Bible stories suitable to tell Beginners and justify your selection in each case.

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CHAPTER XII

HOW TO TELL STORIES

Selection of the story.—In selecting a story for a particular group of children or an individual child, there are at least three distinct considerations: First, the child or children must be held in mind. What are their particular interests, characteristics, needs? The children of a mission Sunday school understanding English very little, with a meager home background might be confused by the story that would bring exceeding pleasure and profit to the children of American parentage with confortable homes. A teacher in an Italian district, where fighting is excessive, might find it wise to withhold such stories as that of "David, the Shepherd Boy," which would stir the emotions leading to combat, and to substitute stories stressing kindness and friendliness even to enemies.

A second consideration is the story. Does it possess the essential qualities of a good story for this age group—short, full of action, good plot, positive ending, child interest? Finally, does the story appeal to the one who is to tell it? The personal factor does enter into the equation. It is impossible to tell a story one does not like as well as the story that grips. There should not be, however, a hasty rejection, as a thoughtful second reading will often change the verdict.

Preparation of the story.—After the story has

been selected, it will need to be carefully studied and rehearsed before it is used. When Marie Shedlock, the great English story-teller, was complimented once upon her rendering of a certain story by Hans Christian Andersen, she said, modestly: "I am glad that you enjoyed it. I spent six months of work on that story." We are not Marie Shedlocks, but perhaps more of us would approach her exquisite artistry if we would pay her price. The first step in preparation is to read the story as many times as may be necessary to get the author's meaning, the truth or truths that he sought to convey through this medium. Is it unselfishness or honesty or fair play or nurture or God's greatness, or man's dependence that is enthroned at the heart of this particular story? To tell a story without an understanding of its purpose is like starting a journey with no idea of the destination.

When once the purpose is clearly in mind, then the plot should be analyzed to find introduction, theme, climax, and conclusion, and a careful outline of principal points under each division either jotted down mentally or on paper. For instance, if the story happens to be the familiar one of "The Journey of the Three Wise Men," it may be outlined thus:

Introduction—Statement about the Wise Men:
1. When they lived.
2. Who they were.
3. What they knew.

Theme—The Search for the Christ Child:
1. The new star in the sky.
2. The preparation for a journey.

3. The starting.
4. The ride across the desert.
5. The visit to Herod.
6. The star leads to Bethlehem.

Climax—The Child is found:

1. Worship and gifts are offered.

Conclusion—The Return:

1. The camels are mounted.
2. The wise men ride away.

With the structure of the story in hand, it is now necessary to do the filling in. Unless the story is dependent for its charm upon its unusual phraseology, it is better not to memorize word for word, as this often makes the telling stilted and unnatural. However, it is very important that the beginning and the end should be altogether satisfactory—the beginning because the effort is often lost if interest is not secured at the outset, and the end, that the last taste may be sweet, the impression left with the hearer strong. It may be well, then, to memorize the introductory and closing sentences and any delightful words, phrases, bits of repetition or verse that appear throughout.

As the preparation proceeds there is perhaps no better plan to follow than to read the story, close the book, and tell the story, read again and tell again, until you have it to your satisfaction. As you read each time, try to get the pictures as the author paints them with all the visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, and gustatory imagery at your command.

The final step in the process is to rehearse before your imaginary audience, thinking of the probable

reactions of your group. Unconsciously, you will adapt the story in advance to meet their needs and you will find fewer surprises when the actual day arrives. It is a help to tell the story aloud, as the transition from a silent to an oral rendering often finds the story-teller far more embarrassed and less fluent than he imagined himself to be. Enunciation, pronunciation, expression and carrying quality can be tested only by rehearsing aloud. A mirror is of assistance too, as it aids in catching awkward gestures, unpleasant facial expression, and bad posture. During the first essays in this delightful art a kind critic is a great blessing, who will listen without being bored, and will point out strong and weak points with unfailing frankness.

Arrangement of the group.—The success of the story has often been spoiled because the group were not seated comfortably, distractions were not properly cared for, and the right atmosphere was not created. The best arrangement for the story is to seat the children informally before the story-teller. They will probably be more comfortable in chairs properly adjusted to height than sitting on the floor, and the control will be easier for the young teacher; however, either position may be used. The chairs should be placed so that no one is crowded for breathing space or elbow room, else irritation is sure to arise in the midst of the story. All the children will want to see the teacher's face, especially as the story proceeds, so great care must be taken that the younger and shorter children are at the front and that every face is visible.

The rules concerning the touching of others with hands or feet need to be well understood

before much story-telling is done. It is better for the teacher to sit as she tells the story. It is less formal and more suited to the activity; it has the added advantage of bringing the face of the story-teller into better range for the children's eyes.

Avoiding distractions.—All distractions should be avoided. The curtains should be adjusted or the group faced so that bright light does not strike the eyes. There should be no flapping shade, buzzing insect, ringing bell, or whispering guests to divide attention, and, if possible, the secretary should keep out the officers of the Sunday school or others who may want to enter until the brief story is finished. Three to five minutes is not long for any message or messenger to wait, and hours of preparation on the story may be lost through the most trivial interruption. The attention of the Beginner is fleeting at best, a veritable will-o'-the-wisp to work with. However, if the story has the proper pull, it will often hold the children through an amazing disturbance. In a certain Beginners' Department, an assistant fainted and fell to the floor in the rear of the group. The story-teller, with quiet self-control, continued the story while the assistant was carried from the room, and not a child in the group wavered in attention or noticed that anything unusual had happened.

If an individual child is not following, the teacher can often address the story to him and thus win his attention. She can do this by looking directly at him, by bringing in his name, as "Harold, the little baby was crying," or by introducing some reference or detail which she knows will appeal to him.

The story mood.—It is very important that the children are rested when the story begins. If they have just placed their chairs and seated themselves, they may not need other activity; but if they have been sitting for five or ten minutes, it is well to introduce a brief game or a few rhythmic movements of body, arms, and feet before the story begins. Sometimes, it is sufficient to rise, stand on tiptoe, turn about, and be seated.

It is important also that the right atmosphere be created for the story. A tale which is absolutely irrelevant to anything discussed or mentioned during the morning may find the children totally unprepared to give intelligent attention and make the necessary associations. The use of a picture, a song already familiar to the children, a little conversation about the theme of the story or its leading character, the explanation of any terms in the story that might puzzle the children and distract attention or lose interest, are devices that may be profitably employed before the story begins. For instance, if "The Little Lost Lamb" is to be told, the teacher may show one or two pictures of sheep; she may let the children tell freely any observations or interesting facts about sheep; she will find out if they know the meaning of the terms "shepherd," "crook," "fold," "flock," and she will mention the custom of the shepherd leading his flock to pasture each day and back to the fold at night. They will then be quite in the mood for the story and alert with intelligent interest from the beginning. It is wise to wait a moment before the first word of the story until every child is quiet and on the *qui vive* for the story-teller's voice. Otherwise,

some children will miss the first sentence or two, and never quite catch up on the meaning of the story.

Reliving the story.—When the actual telling begins, the teacher should forget the book and tell the story as if she were living it, had experienced it herself. It is the *story in you*, not the one in the lesson plan, which will grip the class, someone has wisely said. The actor has only one character, as a rule, to impersonate in a play; the story-teller has several, and she must feel each one through every experience. Voice must change its tone and inflection, facial expression must mirror emotion, and gesture may add to the picture. However, the story-teller's art is the art of telling in language instead of dramatizing in action, and therefore, there must be dignity and quietness for the story should flow easily, and must flow swiftly for the little child. Simplicity and directness are necessary characteristics of artistic style. Artificiality, affectation, elaboration, are in poor taste and will never win success with little children.

Unless the story-teller can use gesture naturally, gracefully, and without self-consciousness, she had better omit it altogether, and clasp the hands loosely in the lap or let them fall at the sides if she is standing. One of our greatest American artists in this field, Mrs. Gudrun Thorne-Thompsen, stands so quietly that it is as if she were only a voice, save for the changing lights in the face.

Language.—Language is of the utmost importance. The words chosen should be simple; action words should predominate; concrete terms full of color should be used in description; English must, of

course, be correct in form and pronunciation, and great care must be taken to enunciate every word distinctly, and to speak slowly enough for the child to follow. "Don't talk so fast," interjected a wee boy one morning as with painful eagerness he tried to follow the story. The teacher must always think that she is telling the story to the child farthest from her, and with no conscious effort her voice will carry. If it is done well, mimicry adds greatly to the interest of the story as well as repetitive phrases, as, for instance, "Ding-dong, ding-dong, ding-dong bell," "Tick-tock, tick-tock, tick-tock, tick," "Chirrup-che-ree," "Mew-mew-mew," or any other sound repeated at intervals. The child greatly enjoys the different intonations for the three bears in "Goldilocks and the Bears," or for the three billy-goats in "Billy Goats Gruff," as they "trip-trap" over the bridge.

Direct discourse is desirable wherever it can be introduced. It makes the story seem much more personal and direct and does not confuse the little child as does the indirect form. Whenever possible the language of the Bible should be used in the Bible story, although for the kindergarten child there must necessarily be considerable adaptation to his own experience and to familiar words. In the stories of the Nativity many beautiful passages can be woven into the story, as, for instance, the words of the angel, "Fear not, Mary. Blessed art thou among women. The Lord is with thee," and again to the shepherds, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people."

After the story.—When the story has been finished,

there are at least two things which the teacher should not do. She must not try to get the story from the children by a fusillade of lively questions as to what the story was about, where it took place, and who were the people in it. Such a practice, one commentator says, might compare with parsing Gray's "Elegy" as an exercise in literary appreciation. In the first place, this would serve to spoil the child's pleasure in the story, and, in the second place, the impression needs to deepen for a while; the child needs an opportunity to think over the story, to live it over through the imagination, if you will, before he is ready to tell it or any part of it.

Then, the teacher must not point the moral of the story or labor to bring the truth to the children by direct application. The child does not understand abstract discussions of truth, and he resents being "preached at." The practice is, therefore, worse than a waste of time, because it may make him dislike the story, changing lively appreciation into disgust. If the story is rightly chosen and well told, the lesson will not fail to carry and so much more effectively through the emotions aroused at the climax than by an intellectual dissertation later.

Spontaneous expression.—However, very frequently after the story, the children will suggest the next activity. Someone will ask to see a picture of the story, and the teacher can show the illustrations in the book, or another child may ask to "play" the story. The children may have their own comments to make on the story content. After the flight into Egypt had been told, Arthur,

aged five, commented with lively indignation, "Gee! I'd 'a broke that old King Herod's leg!" Donald, three and a half, added the following to the story of "The Lost Lamb," "And then the shepherd went out and filled the hole with dirt so no more sheepses could fall in." After the story of Jacob's trip to his Uncle Laban's, several children told of trips they hoped to take some day. "I will go to London," said one; and "I am going to France," said another; and "I am going to Dayton, Ohio," said a third. "Yes," said the teacher, "and God will be in every place where you are." A smile of happiness shone on all the little faces.

Sometimes a child has a very important question to ask. After the story of Joseph being rescued from the pit, where his brothers had placed him, Thomas asked, eagerly, "God keeps you from dying, doesn't he?" Very often the story reminds one or two children of stories they know. After a certain story of Maude Lindsay's, where a little bird falls out of the nest, Marcia told of a little neighbor who fell from a window and struck on her head. "She didn't even die or break her head. She had a strong head." Humorous as some of these contributions are, they are the beginning of story-telling for the child and should be treated with respect and accepted with pleasure. The child who has a story to tell should have a chance to tell it standing or sitting at the front of the group so that all the children can hear. The spontaneous expression must not be allowed to degenerate into trivialities or to dissipate the attention of the group.

Often, the best conclusion of the story hour is the use of a familiar hymn or song, or a spontaneous

prayer that gives the children a chance to express in a beautiful way the emotions aroused. Again, the story may suggest some concrete act of helpfulness, which they can perform, and the discussion may take the form of planning how to carry out the project. Whatever the follow-up on the story, let it be spontaneous expression as far as possible and appropriate to the spirit of the story and the abilities of the children.

For further discussion:

1. What considerations should guide in selecting a story?
2. In preparing a story for telling, what steps should be taken? Why would you not, as a rule, memorize the story word for word?
3. What is a desirable seating arrangement for the story?
4. How may distractions be avoided?
5. Why is the story mood important? How may it be created?
6. To what extent should the story-teller employ dramatic action?
7. List the language requirements for a well-told story.
8. How may the effect of the story be spoiled after the telling? What forms of spontaneous expression would you suggest?

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CHAPTER XIII

PICTURES

THE fascination of the picture for the child begins to manifest itself in the second year and from that time on picture books are the first storybooks —fingered and dog-eared, torn if not made of indestructible material, they bear witness to a charm that places them in the hall of fame beside the battered tin soldier and the old rag doll. When the child comes to the church school, they afford the teacher one of the best contacts that she possesses in winning interest and attention.

BASES OF SELECTION

Childlike content.—In selecting pictures the first question should be whether or not they possess childlike content. They may be handsome pictures of sky or sea, of woodland or pasture, of some famous lady or great old man and yet not contain any interest appeal for children. The child does not care for scenery or portraits unless the scenery is the setting of some familiar or well-loved object or the portrait is that of someone he knows.

Animals, particularly pets with which he is acquainted, birds, other children, babies, and people doing things are some of the subjects that will appeal. "Can't You Talk?" by Holmes, that age-old query of the baby as it looks up into the face of the shaggy dog, is a typical illustration of what attracts, so is "Feeding Her Birds," by Millet —the homey picture of the three tots on the step

CAN'T YOU TALK?

fed by their peasant mother out of the same bowl and with the same spoon. "On the Seashore," by Israel, is another good illustration—children of different ages wading in the sea.

Good art.—A second fundamental consideration is the art. Is this a good picture judged from the technical standpoint? Are the forms correctly drawn? Is the perspective true? Is the proportion right and are the colors good? Has the picture been reproduced well? Are paper and print satisfactory? The child, of course, will not analyze the technique of the picture any more than he does the technique of song or story, but nevertheless taste is being unconsciously formed in these early years, and it should be taste for the beautiful measured not only from the standpoint of content but also of form.

Simple composition.—The composition of the picture should be very simple. There should be very few objects or characters and little in the background, for the mental grasp of the child is limited, and he often fails to find the important characters in the picture because of the mass of detail. As far as possible the whole of the animal or other character should be shown rather than a part, as parts are likely to confuse the child. A little boy argued one day for some time that sheep had only three legs. The only sheep he was familiar with was in a picture, and when the picture was produced the sheep appeared to have but three legs. The picture as a whole needs to be large enough to be readily seen.

Action and color.—Pictures, like stories, are more successful if they represent or suggest action. In-

deed, pictures are, as a rule, better liked when they do tell stories or dramatic points in stories. Color adds very much to the pleasure of the child in the picture, and especially vivid or brilliant color. Walter Sargent says: "The child is first attracted by glitter as was the savage. Let children have lovely glitter as gold and beautiful textures. We have made a mistake in America in subduing to overmuch gray; we have bled colors until they are anæmic. Color of transmitted light is the loveliest of all; children need the flashing brilliance of transmitted light." Some of the posters made abroad for children attract chiefly because of the pure bright colors as well as the clear-cut figures and simple background.

APPRECIATION OF THE PICTURE

Spontaneous.—There are many illustrations which might be given of the spontaneous appreciation of pictures shown by children. When Mary, at five years of age, was first shown "The Sistine Madonna," by Raphael, she gazed spellbound for several minutes and then said in a very soft voice, "Isn't the mother beautiful!" Alice, a little past six, found in her reader an illustration of the baby princess in "Sleeping Beauty." She looked intently and sometime after remarked to her teacher, "I just love the picture of the little baby." Junior was only four when he was given a copy of "The Christmas Chimes," by Blashfield. Every day for some weeks he would ask for it and then sit quietly for sometime looking at it with an expression of pleasure on his face. In and of itself the picture wins appreciation from children not because, as

Sargent says, "they have ability to appreciate a masterpiece but because the thing is related to some experience or place which the child knows and loves or because of its novelty or newness."

The development of appreciation.—To develop appreciation for one picture in particular or for pictures in general it is necessary that the child have constant contact with them, which means more than having them in the room. His attention must be called to the picture and his interest aroused in looking at it. To give him some part in arranging the pictures, an opportunity to show a picture to the other children, the pleasure of holding the picture in his own hands while gazing at it—all of these devices will deepen interest and help in developing appreciation. His own crude attempts in drawing and painting will also stimulate a certain appreciation for the efforts of others.

A choice serves to bring about comparison and thus to stimulate appreciation, as, for instance, "Which picture do you like best?" "Which one do you think is the prettiest?" "Choose the picture that you would like to show to the children." The teacher's glow of enthusiasm and delight in a picture will be caught through suggestion by the children. If, for example, she says with warm appreciation in her voice and face, "I have a lovely picture of a little girl picking flowers to show you," they will probably respond when the picture is shown by looking very pleased and murmuring: "Oh-oh-oh!" "I like it!" "It is a pretty picture," "Let me hold it!" Because of the joy which a sincere appreciation of art gives, we should begin

where the children are and conserve their native interest and appreciation while developing both in the varied ways suggested here.

INTERPRETATION OF THE PICTURE

Real story connecting with picture.—Much valuable information and clear imagery, as well as inspiration emotionally, may be gained through the careful study of pictures. Time spent, therefore, in studying and interpreting the picture yields large returns. Oftentimes the picture is an illustration of some incident in a story which the teacher tells the children or the picture contains practically the whole story.

The latter is true of "Christ Blessing Little Children," by Plockhorst, and of "The Triumphal Entry," also by Plockhorst, while "The Arrival of the Shepherds," by Le Rolle, and "The Lost Sheep," by Soord, represent the climax of the stories of "The Angel and the Shepherds" and "The Little Lost Lamb." The illustration may be shown before the story is told to stimulate interest or interpreted freely by the child after listening to the story. The picture adds greatly to the vividness of the imagery connected with the story and explains certain facts found in the story to the child's satisfaction.

Imaginary story.—Many pictures are not illustrations in whole or in part of any story ever written, although the artist may have had a story in mind. In such an event it aids interpretation to let the child tell a story about the picture. Little Marion was five when one morning at Sunday school she interpreted a modern madonna with her child.

She said: "There, dear. It is your mother. Don't cry. I will take care of you, my precious baby."

Sometimes the teacher may make up a charming imaginary story about the picture which will delight the children. On Mother's Day, a Beginner teacher told the following one about "Mother's Roses," by Jessie Wilcox Smith, which represents a little girl carrying a lovely bowl of pink roses with an intent face and great evident effort. "One day Helen Elizabeth's daddy came home early. He found Helen Elizabeth playing in the yard. He called her to him and he whispered in her ear, 'Can you keep a secret?' She nodded her head, and then he told her that it was mother's birthday. They decided to go to the flower shop and buy her some flowers. When they came to the shop, Daddy said to Helen Elizabeth, 'You choose the flowers, dear.' The man in the shop showed Helen Elizabeth daisies and sweet peas and roses. Helen Elizabeth said, 'I will take roses, pink ones.' Daddy paid for the roses and Helen Elizabeth carried the box. When they reached home, they slipped in the back door. Mother was writing at her desk in the living room and she didn't seem to hear. Daddy got the blue bowl off the shelf in the closet and he and Helen Elizabeth arranged the pink roses When they were all in the bowl, Daddy said, 'Now we will take them to mother.' Helen Elizabeth said, 'Oh, Daddy, can I carry them? I will be very careful.' When Mother looked up from her desk a few minutes later, there was Helen Elizabeth walking very slowly with a big blue bowl of pink roses. Daddy who was standing in the doorway shouted, 'Happy birthday!' Mother took the roses and put

them on her desk, and then she kissed Helen Elizabeth and Daddy and said, 'I never before had such pretty roses on my birthday.' "

Questions on the picture.—As a variation on the story plan, the picture may be interpreted through questions by the teacher which will serve to bring out the characters, objects, and relationships in the picture. For instance, "The Sheepfold," by Pierce, may be treated as follows: "Where are the sheep now?" "Who puts them in the fold?" "Why does the shepherd put the sheep in the fold at night?" "What does he give them to eat?" "What will the sheep do after they have had their supper?" "Where will the shepherd be while they are sleeping?" "Who else is in the fold?" Or "Feeding Her Birds," by Millet, may be interpreted by these questions: "Whom do you see in the picture?" "What is the mother doing?" "How many children has she?" "What do you think she is feeding them?" "Why does she call them her birds?"

DISPLAY OF PICTURES

Permanent pictures.—Every kindergarten room should have a few permanent pictures. These pictures should have a strong religious appeal and they should be the best art available for childhood. "Christ Blessing Little Children," by Plockhorst; "The Good Shepherd," by Plockhorst; "The Divine Shepherd," by Murillo; "The Madonna of the Chair," by Raphael; "A Little Child Shall Lead Them," by Strutt, are all excellent subjects for this purpose. The pictures should be hung low so as to be well within the range of the child's vision. They should be large, clear prints, and if possible

Millet

FEEDING HER BIRDS

to procure good color in one or two of them, the attractiveness will be greatly enhanced for the child. Everyone of the permanent pictures should be studied and appreciated until the child will recognize and love it wherever he finds it.

Incidental pictures.—Every teacher of children should be ever on the alert to add to her file of good incidental pictures connecting with the seasons of the year and illustrating the topics in the course of study for the department. It isn't necessary always to patronize art stores in order to find desirable material. Some of the monthly magazines carry very satisfactory pictures on their covers from time to time and scattered through their pages.

All pictures should be trimmed and mounted neatly on heavy construction or art paper. An oblong sheet (about 9x12 inches), in gray for black-and-white pictures and colored pictures, and in brown for sepia, makes an attractive mount. The pictures should be kept in large marked envelopes or in a catalogue file until they are desired for use. They may be displayed, a few appropriate ones, each Sunday on a burlap screen or felt bulletin, or on a narrow ledge or shelf always within easy range of the children's gaze. One Sunday school has many deep window recesses in which pictures may be exhibited very effectively. A few pictures or picture books may be placed on the tables each Sunday morning where the children may handle and look them over to their hearts' content before the session has really opened. If one or two assistants sit at the picture tables, this will be an excellent time to review through the pictures stories and

topics of interest and to get the individual child's expression. Objects as well as pictures may be handled at the tables, gratifying the desire to touch more freely than can be done in the larger group.

SUPPLEMENTARY USE

Story and song.—The use of the picture in connection with the story has been fully illustrated. It may be used in the same way to stimulate or vivify imagery in the song or to aid the child in understanding certain statements in the song. The old nursery song, "I Love Little Pussy" is charmingly illustrated by Jessie Wilcox Smith, as is also "Hush-a-bye Baby." Many books of children's songs are as lovely picture books as they are song-books.

Conversation.—The picture is a very potent stimulus to conversation. It sets its own problems, inspires questions, the narration of incidents and the recall of bits of verse or prose or other pictures. No pictures for children do this more successfully than those by Jessie Wilcox Smith. One Sunday the children were looking at "Little Drops of Water," which represents a child of five barefooted on the beach letting a handful of sand trickle through her fingers. As they gazed the children began telling all their seaside experiences. They wanted the verse read to them at the bottom of the picture and together they said it again and again:

"Little drops of water,
Little grains of sand,
Make the mighty ocean,
And the pleasant land."

Then Marjorie Prindle said, "I know a verse" and she repeated from Robert Louis Stevenson,

"When I was down beside the sea,
A wooden spade they gave to me,
To dig the sandy shore.
My holes were empty like a cup,
In every hole the sea came up
Till it could come no more."

The wonder of the sea came over that group of little children, and of God, the marvelous creator of land and sea, as the poem was repeated and teacher and children talked together.

Prayer.—A teacher who has used "The Angelus," by Millet, or "Infant Samuel," by Reynolds, knows the effect on little children of the picture representing prayer. Unconsciously they become very quiet; sometimes they ask questions in hushed voices or begin to speak of their own prayer times. The atmosphere of reverence easily follows, and the mood for prayer is already created so that the teacher has only to suggest the act.

Dramatization.—The picture gives such a vivid image often, and especially of action, that it inspires dramatic imitation. On one occasion the picture "Butterflies All," by Jessie Wilcox Smith, had been shown for the first time to a Beginner group. It represents a little girl with golden hair and a sky-blue dress filled with wind, reaching up toward the butterflies. They are of every color and the air is full of them. The little girl looks like a bigger butterfly herself. The teacher introduced this picture with the words, "I have a lovely picture to show you!" When the children looked

at it a joyful "Ah-oh-oh!" burst from them. Then ensued a discussion about butterflies; how you catch them, how tenderly you hold them, and why you let them go. Ann cried at this point, "Let me hold the picture." It was given to her and instantly she clapped her hand on a butterfly, "I have one," she said, and she held her hand carefully closed as if making a little house for the butterfly. Other children then wanted to catch butterflies off the picture. Presently Ann said, "Now let's put them on the flowers." Every child released his butterfly on the vase near at hand; and so spontaneously that one could not tell where it started, the children began to fly themselves. The pianist caught their rhythm and lovely butterflies filled the room.

For further discussion:

1. What elements in a picture appeal to children?
2. Select one familiar picture and criticize its suitability for children from the standpoint of composition.
3. Why should good art be a fundamental consideration?
4. How can the child be directed in interpreting pictures?
5. What pictures elicit spontaneous appreciation? Discuss three ways in which the teacher may develop appreciation.
6. Discuss pictures as an aid in conversation; the teaching of song; dramatization; prayer.
7. What consideration should the teacher bear in mind in choosing permanent pictures? Incidental pictures?

For further reading:

Bailey, Albert Edward, *The Use of Art in Religious Education*, Chapter IV. The Abingdon Press, 1922.

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Stern, William, *Psychology of Childhood*, Part IV. Henry Holt and Co., 1924.

Strayer and Norsworthy, *How to Teach.* The Macmillan Company, 1917.

Sources for pictures:

Abbott Art Store, Chicago, Illinois.

Brown Picture Company, Beverley, Massachusetts.

Copley Prints, Pierce Building, Boston, Massachusetts.

Lesch, Rudolph, Rhine Prints, 13 West 42nd Street, New York City.

Perry Picture Company, Malden, Massachusetts.

Rienthal and Newman Company, 59 West 19th Street, New York City.

Wells, L. C., 225 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

Wilde Picture Company, 120 Boylston Street, Boston, Massachusetts.

Catalog of worthwhile pictures for beginners:

Family and Home Scenes

Gardner, "Two Mothers and Their Families."
Israel, "The Interior of a Cottage."
Millet, "Feeding Her Birds."
Millet, "The First Step."
Smith, Jessie Wilcox, "Hush-a-Bye Baby."
Smith, Jessie Wilcox, "Mother's Roses."
Smith, Jessie Wilcox, "Now I Lay Me."
Smith, Jessie Wilcox, "Once Upon a Time."
Smith, Jessie Wilcox, "Playmates."
Swinstead, "The Pets."
Von Bremen, "Birthday Morning."

Von Bremen, "Come Along."
Von Bremen, "The Little Brother."
Von Bremen, "The Little Nurse."

Animals and Pets

Bonheur, "Brittany Sheep."
Bonheur, "Cows at a Watering Place."
Bonheur, "Sheep in Pasture."
Bonheur, "The Lions at Home."
Carter, "An Interesting Family."
Carter, "Little Foxes."
Carter, "Little Freehold."
Diefenbach, "Little Ducks."
Dupre, "Milking Time."
Dürer, "A Rabbit."
Dürer, "The Squirrels."
Herring, "Farmyard."
Holmes, "Can't You Talk?"
Hunt, "The Dogs' Home."
Landseer, "The Deer Family."
Landseer, "The Squirrels."
Millet, "Bringing Home the New Born Calf."
Millet, "Feeding the Hens."
Munier, "Robin Redbreast."
Paton, "You're No Chicken."
Pierce, "The Sheepfold."
Raeburn, "Boy with the Rabbit."
Smith, "I Like Little Pussy."

Fall

Atkinson, "Faithful and True."
Millet, "The Angelus."
Millet, "The Gleaners."
Smith, "Among the Autumn Leaves."
Smith, "Helping Hands."
Volkmann, "The Harvest Time."
Wells, "Autumn."

Winter

Lillferis, "Bullfinches in Snow."
Smith, "Off to Play."
Smith, "Shoveling Snow."
Weczerzick, "Rabbit in the Snow."
Wells, "Winter Scenes."

Spring

Beyschlag, "Spring Has Come."
George, "The Plowman."
Glucklich, "Fruhlingslied."
Knaus, "Spring."
Millet, "Planting Potatoes."
Smith, "April Showers."
Smith, "Spring Time."
Smith, "Tulips."

Summer

Glucklich, "Hirtenlied."
Israels, "Children of the Sea."
Ruysdael, "Marine Views."
Smith, "Butterflies All."
Smith, "Little Drops of Water."
Smith, "O-o-oh—It's Cold!"
Smith, "Ring a-round a Rosie."
Smith, "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star."
Volkmann, "Wheat Fields with Poppies."

Bible Illustrations

Copping, "Hope of the World."
Correggio, "Holy Night."
Delaroche, "The Finding of Moses."
Gardner, "Young David."
Hofmann, "Christ Preaching from a Boat."
Hofmann, "Worship of the Magi."
LeRolle, "Arrival of the Shepherds."
Murillo, "Jacob's Dream."
Murillo, "The Christ Child."

Murillo, "The Divine Shepherd."
Plockhorst, "Apparition to the Shepherds."
Plockhorst, "Christ Blessing Little Children."
Plockhorst, "The Good Shepherd."
Plockhorst, "The Triumphal Entry."
Portaels, "Wise Men Guided by a Star."
Raphael, "Madonna of the Chair."
Raphael, "Sistine Madonna."
Reynolds, "The Infant Samuel."
Sinkel, "The Christ Child."
Soord, "The Lost Sheep."
Strutt, "A Little Child Shall Lead Them."
Titian, "Rest in Flight to Egypt."
Zurbaran, "The Virgin at Six."

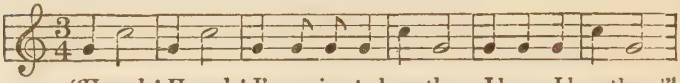
CHAPTER XIV

MUSIC—INSTRUMENTAL AND SONG

In musical development there is a rough analogy between the human race and the child. Primitive man showed a response to rhythm by movements of the body such as clapping the hands, dancing about, and beating on a tom-tom. There was no melody or harmony in these efforts, simply rhythm. His first attempts to sing consisted in rude ejaculations and cries, far from tuneful in the estimation of civilized man. Later the song combined with the dance in the celebration of successful hunts and fights, and in funeral and other religious ceremonies. The song was usually a recital more or less monotonous by a chief or priest with a chorus of all voices on dramatic points.

Likewise the little child's first musical response is to rhythm. Within the first year the body moves in an attempt to react to music played or sung. Small children clap the hands and stamp the feet with glee. Melody or song also appears as a spontaneous expression of feeling similar to its origin in the race. A small child of three was in a swing pushed gently by her father, and as she swung she sang softly, "I swing! I swing! I swing! I swing!" in a rhythmic chant. Little Anne, four and a half years old, received a gift of some beads on the Christmas tree. As she sat fingering them, this

little song of joy flowed spontaneously from her lips:



"Hurrah! Hurrah! I'm go-ing to keep them, I know I love them!"

THE PURPOSE OF MUSIC IN THE BEGINNERS' DEPARTMENT

The rhythmic sense.—All the music selected for kindergarten children should be very rhythmic, and in playing the rhythm should be emphasized in such a way as to develop the child's rhythmic sense. The child who feels rhythm and moves and speaks rhythmically has a mental and physical integration that the child lacks whose movements and speech are jerky and spasmodic. He does not coordinate as well with other children and tends to be out of step spiritually as well as physically. The results of developing rhythm are therefore very far-reaching.

Social cooperation.—Through rhythmic expression and singing there is a socialization in the group, a unity of feeling that makes for better spirit and for cooperation in other ways. The effect of music on morale is well illustrated in the use of it with armies, particularly when marching to battle. It makes for a solidarity in the group that nothing else produces.

Appreciation of beautiful music.—Another purpose of music in the Sunday school is to develop taste for and appreciation of beautiful music, especially of devotional or religious music. There is some of this music well adapted to the kindergarten child, and he can learn to recognize and

love certain compositions, thus laying the foundation for an increasing appreciation as he grows older. Music will gradually become a source of pure joy and uplift which will make him a happier and better individual.

Atmosphere created.—There is no more potent means of creating atmosphere than music. Rollicking little tunes will bring laughter and the dancing step. Lullabies will hush the voice and render the expression of the face tender and sweet. Martial songs will quicken the pace, bring up the head and chest and deepen the voice. Hymns will induce the quiet, reverential mood. The teacher who understands can play upon the emotions of the child as a violinist on the strings of his instrument.

Expression of thought and feeling.—The expression of thought and feeling, especially the expression of feeling, is the deepest function of music. There would be fewer emotional repressions if all people sang freely and spontaneously: joy, grief, anger, love would find wholesome outlet. The child expresses his emotions, and they are as varied as his experiences, in the songs that others have created for him and in those that he creates himself. He is finding a world of wonders all about him in the flowers and the birds, the waves and the sunset, the white bunny and the great shaggy dog. Through the song he expresses the feeling they arouse, and without it he would be at a loss to tell the story on the emotional side.

SELECTION OF MUSIC

The standard for the music.—The best music, judged by the musical critic's standard, is none

too good for the children. Jazzy tunes have no place in the church school. If taste for and appreciation of beautiful music is to be cultivated, cheap and trashy songs must be eliminated. Little children do acquire a taste for better things which evokes telling criticisms at times. One morning a substitute at the piano played rag-time for the children to march to. As they passed by the piano, one little lad stopped and said, "Why do you play that monkey music here?" A five-year-old boy lived in a fashionable hotel, where there were frequent evening dances. He always looked very tired at kindergarten the morning after one of these dances. When the teacher asked him one morning why he was so tired, he said, "Well, I couldn't sleep because the band played that stuff, you know, with the music left out."

Although the music should be the best available, it must be simple with decided rhythm and melody but no complex harmony. Neither words nor music should express adult emotions; for example, love songs are not appropriate. Some selections from the great masters may be used, but the folk music of different nations is the most desirable source; pure, simple, rhythmic, beautiful, it wells up a fountain of melody and ever inspires the child heart to sing. There are also modern composers who have caught the inspiration of the folk and have produced some lovely contributions to child song.

Standard for the words.—The words of the song must be satisfactory as well as the music. They must possess a childlike appeal which will induce interest and a feeling response. Many hymns and

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old songs used for little children formerly were filled with sentiments about heaven, its golden streets, angel harps, and throngs of singing saints about the throne. Two, beginning respectively "There's a land that is fairer than day," and "O mother dear, Jerusalem," are typical. However much those in middle or later life yearn for the peace and rest of the heavenly city, these sentiments are most unchildlike. The child lives in the gay, glad life of the here and now and what rest he does take is usually enforced. Neither are hymns stressing sin and redemption appropriate for those who are not immoral but only unmoral and not at all conscious of their lack of morality; such a gospel song as the one beginning, "Jesus, Saviour, pilot me over life's tempestuous sea," received therefore a sensible rendering for a child when one small boy sang, in all sincerity and with great gusto, "Jesus, save your pie for me."

Songs about the flowers, the birds, the animals, the changing seasons, the home joys and occupations—hymns thanking God for these tangible daily benefits and asking him for his blessing and care, fill the need at four and five. When an appropriate content has been found, the language must be analyzed to see that there are enough familiar words and phrases to carry the meaning to the child. For instance, in singing a Christmas tree song, where the line runs,

> "O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,
> How *laden* are your branches!"

a little girl translated that troublesome word "laden" into her own vocabulary as follows,

"O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,
How *late at night* are your branches!"

This error, although illustrative of the danger we have in mind, could easily be overcome in the teaching of this particular song. The song whole should paint a vivid picture in poetic and beautiful language, or it should contain a tiny story developed in the same exquisite form. The standard applying to song is the same standard which should apply to all verse for children. Poetry is often disliked by children. If it were sufficiently rhythmic, short, and either painted a picture or told a story without too difficult words and transpositions, it would be loved. The two following poems are typical of the best in children's verse:

"Sing, bluebird, sing,
And tell us it is spring.
Your little mate is on her nest,
Three blue eggs beneath her breast,
Sing, bluebird, sing."

—*Clara Belle Baker.*[1]

"Flowers are closed and lambs are sleeping,
Lullaby, oh, lullaby.
Stars are up, the moon is peeping,
Lullaby, oh, lullaby.
While the birds are silence keeping,
Lullaby, oh, lullaby.
Sleep my baby, fall asleeping,
Lullaby, oh, lullaby."

—*Christina Rossetti.*

[1] *Songs for the Little Child*, by Clara Belle Baker and Caroline Kohlsaat. Reprinted by permission of The Abingdon Press, publishers.

If music is satisfactory and verse is satisfactory, there is one more test—do they fit together? Do they both tell the same story, paint the same picture, convey the same feeling, and, technically, does the rhythm of one match the rhythm of the other? We have all experienced the anomaly of singing stirring words to a lullaby tune or a martial air set to a poem depicting peace and contentment. We have had also to perform the feat of stretching words and even syllables to meet the exigencies of the musical beat, or of swallowing syllables and sometimes words to accommodate the same imperative. Luther's "Cradle Hymn," measured by all of these standards, is as perfect a religious song for the kindergarten child as has ever been written.

Other technical requirements.—The song should not only be short as to the number of stanzas, one or two being enough for the kindergarten child, but each line should be short and there should be few lines to the stanza. If several stanzas are attempted, the child is confused and gets none of them well. Long lines and many of them in the stanza also make it more difficult for him to grasp the meaning and to get the expression. The following little song is very ideal for the four-year-old from this standpoint:

"Hear them peep, peep, peep,
Little chickens, little chickens,
Hear them peep, peep, peep,
Under mother's wing they creep."[1]

The pitch of the child's song needs to be relatively

[1] *Songs for the Little Child*, by Clara Belle Baker and Caroline Kohlsaat. Reprinted by permission of The Abingdon Press, publishers.

high as is the pitch of the child's voice. Some musicians place it from E flat to high G. The first songs should have no difficult intervals although there should be enough variety in the tune to provide beauty. The piano accompaniment should carry the full melody until the song is perfectly known.

TECHNIQUE IN USE

The piano.—In playing for appreciation the pianist should emphasize melody and rhythm. She should never play very heavily, as the loud tone excites little children and overstimulates them. They are also distracted by the loud sound and lose the appreciative mood. The selections should be very short, lasting only two or three minutes. In playing for any type of physical expression the rhythm should be strongly emphasized—the playing should not be heavy, however. When the piano accompanies the singing, the pianist should touch the keys very lightly, stressing the melody and rhythm. Almost all accompanists play too loud for little children, whose voices are soft and are either lost in the accompaniment or are strained in the attempt to keep above it.

The children should sing frequently without the piano to avoid any undue dependence upon the piano and to make them feel that song is an expression of thought and feeling which can be enjoyed at any time, even though there were not a musical instrument within a hundred miles. Where a piano is not available or there is not a musician to play it, the victrola may be substituted. There are many lovely records for developing appreciation

in children, and others that can be used for rhythm work. The one who plays the piano needs to be in closest sympathy with the teacher and the children. She must watch both carefully so that her music will fit into the purpose of the plan and meet the needs of the children.

The new song.—If song is to be an expression of thought and feeling, then it must grow out of or connect with experiences that are of vivid interest to the child during these early years. Otherwise it will always seem a thing apart from his life rather than its most intimate expression. Wherever possible the teacher should encourage the spontaneous songs of little children. Donald, three and a half, sang one morning in Sunday school in a monotone about the squirrel in his yard,

"Little Squirrel up in the tree,
Goes to bed at night."

Elizabeth, when a little past four, put her desire that Jesus might be like her into the following song: "The little baby Jesus was born, and his mother took care of him, and he grew to be a little girl." Thomas, aged five, sang one morning at Sunday school after having had difficulty with his mother and a little estrangement earlier in the morning, "I love you very much, mother dear!"

No one of these songs was a beautiful song, judged from a critical viewpoint, but each one had a worthy thought and true feeling. They were accepted by the teacher as a real contribution, but were not sung by the other children in the present form, although Donald's and Thomas's were

changed somewhat by the teacher to gain better verse and melody and then used by the group that morning. Elizabeth's error about the sex of Jesus was challenged by the children and corrected. The teacher then suggested singing, "The Dear Little Jesus," a hymn with the same thought more fully and beautifully expressed.

These illustrations suggest the attitude of the teacher toward such spontaneous contributions and the use which may be made of them. Just as naturally the songs that are to be taught the children should grow out of experiences common to the group. If a little bunny has been brought to visit the department, after he has been watched and talked about and fed, the teacher may begin to sing:

"Bunny, pretty bunny, why raise your long ears?
You know me, little bunny, and what need for fears?
I give you green cabbage and carrots and bread,
And a little house to live in with leaves for a bed."[1]

Some child has told of a new baby, and the teacher asks if mother sings to it and if perhaps the little girl would like to know a song for babies. Then the teacher sings some one of the many lovely lullabies for kindergarten children.

Other songs may be connected with pictures or stories or objects, but always in such a way as to create the mood and the background of understanding for the song before its presentation. If this procedure is carefully followed, it will be possi-

[1] *Songs for the Little Child*, by Clara Belle Baker and Caroline Kohlsaat. Reprinted by permission of The Abingdon Press, publishers.

ble at the first to give the song as a whole, words and music. Artistically it is a mistake to present music, and then verse read as prose, and finally the song. If the contact has been rightly made and enunciation is clear, the child will understand the song and love it from the first as a song, without the hyphenated introduction.

Rhythm.—The rhythm of the song will be quickly acquired if the children can step it or clap it or tap it. Sometimes just the music of the song may be used while the rhythmic expression takes place and the response can be rather loudly made. Again, the children may clap or tap softly while they sing. Any very vigorous physical movement inhibits singing on the part of children, and some children may forget to sing if they are only clapping or tapping, or find that they cannot manage the two sets of coordination at once.

Memorization.—The most economical method of learning rote material is the whole-part method. The song should be sung again and again as a whole until every child can sing every word. The teacher should, however, single out difficult phrases or words to be sure that they are understood as to meaning and correctly pronounced. Special repetition may be given also to a difficult phrase musically. So simple a sentence as "He careth for you," was sung by one five-year-old, "He carrots for you." The unusual form of "care" had confused this child and he had changed the meaning entirely by his substitution.

A little analysis of the thought of the song will help wonderfully with the expression in singing as well as with the memorizing. For instance, the

following questions may be used with the "Dear Little Dolly" song which runs:

"I've a dear little dolly,
She has eyes of bright blue,
She can open and shut them,
And she smiles at me too."[1]

What have you? What color are the dolly's eyes? What can she do with her eyes? What does she do for you? Tell me all these things when you sing about the dolly.

In repeating the song, the play spirit must always be present; otherwise repetition becomes drudgery and the child will dislike the song. Sometimes all the children may sing, then three or four children, then one child. They may sing with the piano and without it, standing and again sitting. The teacher may close her eyes and listen, she may go to the other end of the room and listen. These are a few devices for varying repetition to keep it interesting.

Pitch and tone quality.—There are many things involved in pitch and tone quality. The body needs to be free and rhythmically coordinated, the ear has to be trained to listen so that difference in pitch and tone can be detected, happiness and confidence must be present, and there must be real appreciation of the meaning of the song and feeling for it. The last two the teacher in the Sunday school can secure, and she can accomplish something in arriving at the first two objectives.

[1] *Songs for the Little Child*, by Clara Belle Baker and Caroline Kohlsaat. Reprinted by permission of The Abingdon Press, publishers.

If the teacher and assistants refrain from singing as early as possible in teaching the new song, or sing very softly so that the children's voices can be heard, if the piano is properly subdued and dispensed with part of the time, and if the individual child is encouraged to sing alone wherever he can do so without self-consciousness or fear, the teacher will be able to help overcome the individual limitations and the group singing will improve. It is a mistake to tell children to sing "soft" or "loud," as this suggestion usually secures repression or screeching and not beauty of tone. It is much more effective to call their attention to the character of the song, that is, how quiet they must be in putting a baby to sleep, and the soft tone will creep into the lullaby.

In song as in everything else the teacher is the pattern; if she sings with easy breath control, true to pitch, with beauty of tone and sincere appreciation of the meaning of the song, the children will imitate. It is well to use every other device to secure beauty in result, but there can be no substitute for the teacher who loves the song and feels its ministry in her own religious experience.

For further discussion:

1. Select a song that you use with Beginners and state the objectives to be attained through it.
2. How should music be taught in the kindergarten to conform to the theory concerning its beginning in child development?
3. Criticize one familiar song from the standpoint of music, of words, of general technical requirements.

4. What demands would you make upon the pianist in the Beginners' Department?

5. How may the teacher encourage the spontaneous songs of little children? Of what value are they?

6. Criticize the presentation of the words of the song before the music; the music before the words.

7. Why is it often not effective to ask children to sing "soft" or "loud"?

8. Would you teach the song a line or a phrase at a time? Explain.

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CHAPTER XV

RHYTHMIC AND DRAMATIC PLAYS

The natural expression.—Whatever else play may be it is certainly an attitude of mind which finds joy in the activity and cares not for the result as an ulterior thing. Rhythmic and dramatic expression is one manifestation of this play activity which literally engages the whole life of the child during the first six to eight years. Naturally and spontaneously he reveals his feelings and interprets life about him through bodily movement. This method of communicating precedes the spoken language and never is entirely discarded for it. When a child is happy, he wiggles with delight, much like a little puppy; he skips and runs, and dances and claps his hands, even whirling about in an ecstasy of joy if the occasion warrants. If discontented or grieved, he walks slowly, drags his feet, falls to the floor, and cries aloud in his distress. Every emotion, every passing mood is mirrored by the bodily expression.

As he develops clear imagery he becomes a bird and flies, or a bear and walks on all fours growling, or a dog running and barking. In many instances no one particularly stimulates this play; it is untaught. The child obeys a law of his nature in thus expressing image and feeling. Later images are put together and, still spontaneously, the plot of a story is played out—very fragmentary, very

crude, but unmistakably a beginning in story-building. The bird builds a nest and flies to and from her nest, perhaps feeding her young. The bear has a den where he sleeps and out of which he emerges growling; he catches his prey and returns with it to the den. The dog goes to market and returns home again. Later still, the child may attempt to play a short story or mother goose rhyme that has been told him.

THE VALUE IN THE CHURCH SCHOOL

Gives joy.—Participation in rhythmic and dramatic plays makes for happiness. Sometimes little children will laugh aloud with pleasure when simply skipping or running or galloping. To "play a story" means the keenest interest on the part of the actors and the audience, but the actors surpass the audience in happiness.

Physical and mental health is promoted through the happy emotional experiences and such associations with the Sunday school make for an attitude of love toward it. Teddy had attended for the first time. When he returned home his mother asked him what he had learned at Sunday school. Teddy replied promptly with a beaming face, "I learned to dance!" Teddy had never skipped before, and the joyous freedom of the movement had deeply impressed him.

Provides physical exercise.—A certain little boy of four said after an experience in the old-fashioned Sunday school, "I don't like Sunday school." When asked why not, he replied, "Well, they make me sit down when I want to stand up." The active body of the four-year-old cried out against the

physical repression of long periods of quiet sitting. An abundance of rhythmic and dramatic play rests and relaxes the child from the strain of "keeping still" in story, conversation, and prayer. Many children have hated Sunday school and church chiefly because of the physical discomfort culminating in nervous irritability.

Expresses ideas and emotions.—The child not only expresses unconsciously his own moods in physical movements but he puts his ideas and feelings about life into external form. He expresses the meaning of the life which he imitates as far as he senses it, he translates, as Caroline Crawford says, "fact into value." The facts about a bird are a head, a body, two feet and two wings, but the value of that bird is a free thing which darts across the blue like a shaft of light from morn till night—"Hail to thee, blithe spirit, Bird thou never wert." And so the little child catches the value of bird, of horse, of engine, of mother, of daddy, of the fireman and expresses it in the characteristic activity.

Engenders sympathy.—As the child studies life about him and imitates it in his play, he gains a sympathetic understanding that he could acquire in no other way. When he has kept a little store and sold things to his playmates, he has a fellow feeling for the grocer that he didn't possess before; moreover, he is very canny thereafter in observing grocer. When the little girl "plays mother" and dresses and feeds her dolly and puts it to sleep, she has a sympathy for mother altogether new in her experience. Dramatization forces an understanding of life and a unity with it which no other art secures.

Socializes.—This very feeling of unity socializes

FLYING BIRDS

the child, makes him constantly more a part of society. Rhythmic and dramatic play in the church school has the added advantage of bringing the child into cooperation with other children. At first he plays alongside of other children but finally he is playing with them. One child acts, another takes the cue from that act and plays on, and so the dramatization proceeds. The child who takes his turn out of place or does not play when he should bungles the game and brings upon his head the condemnation of the group. Thus through the "give-and-take" of child society socialization proceeds, and fair play and consideration for others gradually emerge.

CHARACTERISTIC DRAMATIZATIONS OF LITTLE CHILDREN

Rhythmic plays.—The first expression which the new child, as a rule, will participate in is the keeping time with hands or feet to some very simple marked rhythm. Different children in the group will suggest a variety of ways to do this: feet stamp, heels tap, toes tap, feet slide back and forth, hands clap, twirl, shake, slide. Standing, the child can get more freedom of motion and some of the larger body movements can be very successfully attempted as, swinging of arms, turning and bending of body, jumping lightly on the toes. Then follows movement about the room in march, run, skip, gallop, slide, occasionally combined with clapping of hands, stamping of feet or arm movements. The kindergarten child gradually gains the coordinations and the confidence that will enable him to take part freely with the group.

Representative plays.—The rhythmic plays gradually take on the form of representative play as

the child develops bodily skill and clear imagery. Not only is there characterization of childish mood as in the skip but characterization through personifying is freely suggested. Children in the Kindergarten Department can profitably personify birds, butterflies, bunnies, squirrels, lambs, chickens, ponies, leaves, flowers, snowflakes, soldiers, firemen, carpenters, and other animals and people with whom they need to come into closer understanding and sympathy.

Dramatization of stories.—The pure representative play does not contain a plot or story. The children fly as birds until the image of bird fades or interest wanes; or they hop as bunnies or gallop as ponies. The characteristic activity satisfies and has no climax except through the span of its own momentum which always strikes a high point from which it declines. There comes a time, however, when the children will suggest a story to be played or when they will want to act out, perhaps at the teacher's suggestion a story, verse, or song with which they are familiar. For kindergarten children the play must be very short with few characters and plenty of action; what speech is included should be direct discourse. A song typical of the simple action which kindergarten children can follow is one about snowbirds:

"Hear them tweet, tweet, tweet,
Little snowbirds, little snowbirds,
Hear them tweet, tweet, tweet,
Let us throw them crumbs to eat."[1]

[1] *Songs for the Little Child*, by Clara Belle Baker and Caroline Kohlsaat. Reprinted by permission of The Abingdon Press, publishers.

All the children may enjoy hopping about as snowbirds saying "Tweet, tweet, tweet." Then the group may divide and while some of the children hop about as snowbirds, others throw them crumbs of bread, calling to them gently.

A story well adapted for dramatization is the "Little Pink Rose," by Sara Cone Bryant. It tells of the little pink rose in a brown house down under the ground visited by the rain which is refused admission and later by the sun also forbidden to enter. However, when at last they call together, the pink rose can no longer resist and invites them both in. Whereupon they run with her to the top of the earth, she puts her head through and one day is the prettiest pink rose in the garden. Every child likes to be the pink rose and to sit like a ball on the floor while the teacher personifies rain and sun and he replies. Later one child may be the rose; another, rain; and a third, the sun. The story of "The Baby Moses" is one of the Bible stories which can be successfully dramatized by kindergarten children, one child representing the mother; another the little sister, Miriam; a third, the princess; and either a tiny child or the doll, the little baby Moses.

The festival.—No formal plays or festivals ought to be attempted with kindergarten children, but the spirit of the festival, be it Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, May Day, or the birthday of one of their number, is so fully theirs that it should find expression in a festival program. For instance, at the Christmas season when they have decorated a tree, and fathers and mothers have come, each little child may wear a chain of

paper or cranberries or a spray of holly or a little red-and-green cap. All may skip in jubilantly with their mysterious presents for father and mother, and put them under the tree. They may sing their glad carols about the birth of the Christ-child and the teacher may tell the dearly loved story. Afterward the Christmas tree may be lighted and all may dance about it—one circle, two circles, perhaps three circles. Then, skipping again—for who could walk on so joyous an occasion?—each child has a turn to get his gifts and give them. And before they go home the teacher finds a little surprise on the tree for each of them—a tiny bell or a little doll or ball; anything is precious that comes from this wonderful tree!

TECHNIQUE IN CONDUCTING

Preparation.—For rhythmic play, the technique is very simple. The piano may play a certain rhythm and the children suggest an appropriate bodily response or the teacher may suggest the response. On the other hand the children may name or show a rhythm and the piano follow with appropriate music. For representative and dramatic play, more time has to be given to prepare the group so that imagery and ideas will be strong and clear enough for vivid expression. It doesn't matter how many times children have played being birds before; for every fresh personification the image needs to be recalled and strengthened. This can be done by looking out the window and watching the flight of a bird, by showing a picture, by painting a vivid word picture.

Before the dramatization of song or story can be

effective the children should know the material "by heart." This usually entails many repetitions of the story, but kindergarten children thrive upon repetition. When the teacher thinks that the group knows and feels the story, she may suggest a dramatization if the children do not propose it. However, should the children not welcome the idea enthusiastically but demur or be indifferent, it is the part of wisdom to press the suggestion no further. The spirit is everything here, for there can be no real dramatization unless the children themselves have caught a vision which they are eager to express. A forced dramatization, dictated word by word, is the most pitiable travesty on this loveliest of the child arts.

Organization.—The organization for the dramatization should be planned in advance by teacher and children, so that action may flow freely when once the play begins. The circle or half-circle arrangement of chairs gives an open space for action, and there must be space for successful dramatization, and also for the audience to view the actors. The first important step in organization is to choose the actors. As far as possible with kindergarten children it is desirable to let the whole group act each character first. If there are birds in the story, all can be birds; if flowers, all are flowers; if bears, as in "The Three Bears," all may be bears. This procedure satisfies the children and makes it easier for the audience to practice inhibition later when a few children do the acting. It also gives the practice in imitating or representing character.

The next step, if it seems wise to continue the

dramatization further, is to choose children for the different parts. The child should be enthusiastic about the part that he is to play; but even if a child wants to take a major part or is chosen by the children to take it, he should not be selected by the teacher if he is too timid, too self-conscious, or too slow to act with moderate success. The poor actor sacrifices the interest of the entire group and makes the play a disappointment. He should remain a part of the chorus, trying out the minor parts until he gradually overcomes his limitations.

The setting also should be carefully planned. In the story of Moses it is necessary to indicate the home of Moses, the stream of water, the palace of the princess, and the cradle boat for the baby. In the story of "The Good Shepherd" the pasture, the path, the rock where the lamb fell, and the sheepfold should be designated. While the children may suggest places and furniture, the teacher should guide their decisions to secure some unity and appropriateness. The children may otherwise set the places too close together or in such remote parts of the room that action is halted or the audience cannot see. Furniture can be very easily improvised from the material at hand. Chairs may represent a boat, a train, an aeroplane, a bed, a sofa, a bridge, a house, a rock with a hole in it, and a limitless number of other objects.

The child is in the make-believe period where the imagination is a fairy's wand, and transforms the real at a touch into the ideal. The costume is as easily supplied as the setting, and not much of either is needed. A stick and the boy is a shepherd; an apron and the girl is a mother; a gold

DRAMATIZATION OF THE CHRISTMAS STORY

paper band and—presto!—a princess! Elaborate setting and costume serve to confuse this little child and to render the dramatization less spontaneous and happy. A very simple statement made by the children themselves as to their use of the setting as they choose it, will review the action of the story for them, and serve the same purpose as a more formal study of the play does for older children.

Action.—From the time the play begins to its close the teacher should interrupt as little as possible, and if she must interfere, let it be always in the spirit of the play. Three little children were representing father, mother, and child. Mother and child went out to make a call in the afternoon and, according to the play, should have come home before father to prepare the tea. However, father in this case arrived home in advance. Whereupon the teacher without waiting to see how the children would solve the problem thus presented, rushed into the house and began to reprove father. "Kenneth," she said, "go back to your office; you shouldn't get home before Alice does." The atmosphere of make-believe had fled. Kenneth was Kenneth, a crestfallen little boy. Alice trembled lest she too might make a mistake and be rudely interrupted.

The children should use their own words and, if necessary, let them prompt one another. Where the play is all expressed in action and there is no discourse, the teacher may supply a musical accompaniment or a narrative which will tie action together and serve to stress the climax. For instance, if the children wish to play the story of the garden

where every child is a little seed sleeping through the winter, awaking in the spring, and gradually growing to maturity, the commentary may run: "All through the winter when the north wind blows, the seeds in the garden sleep warm beneath a blanket of snow. By and by the south wind blows and the warm spring sun melts the snow. The rain falls on those seeds; the sun shines on them, and something wonderful happens. Each seed sends up a tiny green shoot. These little plants grow and grow; and then they blossom. Oh! see the garden full of flowers."

If music is used, it should follow and be subordinate to the action, as a rule, although at times it may suggest or guide action; and it serves always to make imagery more vivid and to round out or complete the dramatic form. In a dramatization of "The Lost Lamb" a happy, contented theme may accompany the journey of the flock to the pasture and their grazing there; change of tempo and heavy chords, the storm which drives the sheep home; an agitated theme, the search for the little lost lamb; a joyous cadence, the discovery of the lamb and the return home.

Criticism.—After the dramatization is completed, or before the story is played again if the children want to reproduce it, lead them to criticize themselves, bringing out their strong and weak points. The teacher may ask questions as, "What animal could you hear best?" "Did you see what the father did when he came to the door of the house?" "Why couldn't you see?" "What part of the story was left out?" or she may suggest thus, "Tell which one of the children you could hear best";

"Tell which one you liked best in the play"; "Tell what part of the play you liked best"; "Let Harold tell how he could have made his part better."

Criticism must be handled very tactfully and impersonally to get the best results and it should always be constructive, stressing the corrective rather than the flaw. The teacher needs to possess the dramatic sense herself, real feeling for the dramatic situations in the story. She should make a careful study of the drama from the art standpoint. She must also understand the little child's approach to dramatization and be keenly sympathetic and appreciative of his first shy attempts in this field. Adult criticism and analysis must not chill the spontaneity and unstudied naïveté of this embryo actor.

For further discussion:

1. Give one illustration from your observation of the fact that the child reveals his feelings and interprets life in bodily movement.
2. How do you justify the use of rhythmic and dramatic play in the church school? Would you employ the same arguments in appealing to a clergyman, a business man, and a mother?
3. Define by citing instances, under your observation —rhythmic play, representative play, dramatization of stories.
4. Make a plan for the celebration of the Thanksgiving festival in the Beginners' Department.
5. What preparation is essential to success in conducting a dramatic play with a group of children?
6. How would you choose the actors in the Beginners'

Department? What help would you give in planning setting and costume?

7. When should the teacher interfere during a dramatization? To what extent should criticism be encouraged?

8. Suggest the musical accompaniment for one play.

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CHAPTER XVI

MANUAL ACTIVITY

Of all the play activities which little children engage in there is no one that has a more universal appeal to all children than handwork. It is characteristic of the small child to be busy with his hands, manipulating, making and unmaking, imitating, creating! There are children who will not try to skip or sing or talk, but rarely a child who will not touch blocks or sand or crayon. In fact, this interest in making things is one of the four outstanding interests upon which several curricula for little children have been based.

PURPOSE OF HANDWORK IN THE BEGINNERS' DEPARTMENT

To give satisfaction.—The child in the Sunday school derives not one whit less satisfaction in using his hands than the child in the kindergarten or in the home. In a certain system of kindergartens an experiment on the values of handwork demanded that a control group, including perhaps half of the children, be deprived of handwork for a period of four months. Open rebellion on the part of the children followed and it was supported by the parents because of the complaints made at home. Every Sunday morning little children say, "What are we going to make to-day?" or "Aren't we going to make something?"

If the activity were not a wholesome one, or if it contributed nothing to the objectives of religious education, the mere fact of giving satisfaction would not be sufficient to recommend it for the brief Sunday program, but under the circumstances the pleasure it gives is a decided asset as it affords the child a strong motive for coming to Sunday school and creates, therefore, a liking for the Sunday service.

To learn through doing.—In the making of things the child learns. He understands as he works out projects—the nature of the material, the nature of the process, and the nature of the result. To tell a child about carpentry or weaving or modeling or painting will never give him the insight that handling the carpenter's tools, weaving a rug, modeling an apple, or painting a picture does, no matter how crude the result in each case. The child not only gets information about the work but he learns to appreciate the worker. Four-year-old Bobby was greatly impressed with the carpenter's skill after he had labored for fifteen minutes to drive a nail in a board and the nail went in "crooked" in the end.

The child's own efforts teach him to respect the efforts of others and in time the marvelous work of God, the great Creator. Edith Read Mumford tells of the slum-bred child whose mother made artificial flowers for a living. This little girl went to the country and walked in wonder through a garden of real flowers. "We couldn't afford to make such good flowers for the money we get," she said as she touched them reverently.

To acquaint with religious truth.—Spiritual truth

if grasped at all by the child must be in story, picture, dramatization, or manual project. It is the truth made objective, concrete, that the child can grasp. Watch a group of little children gather about a creche—the tiny stable made of wood with a wooden manger in it, figures of sheep, dogs, oxen, and a gray donkey standing about, hay in the manger and on the hay a baby form representing the Christ-child. Very reverently the children touch it but with a sense of the reality of the story that they have not experienced before. The story of "The Lost Lamb" has been worked out in the sand table. There are the hills on which the sheep grazed, the steep and rocky road leading back to the fold, and the dangerous place in the rock where the lamb fell. The children gaze and gaze as if the understanding of the story were for the first time dawning upon them.

The teacher must be sure, however, that the handwork does impress the spiritual truth in the lesson. The story is told of the teacher who helped the children make a high inclosure of blocks and lower a little boy into it to illustrate the story of "Joseph and His Brethren." That performance was an exceedingly interesting one to the children and was enjoyed by all to the point of hilarity; but it served to distract the attention of the children from the spiritual truths of the story—the care of God, the love of the father Jacob, the forgiving spirit of Joseph. Another teacher illustrated "The Fall of Jericho" by having the children build a wall of blocks and then march about it seven times. At the sound of the trumpet, every child faced the wall and kicked down the blocks in front of

him. No surer plan could have been invented to dissipate the wonder and reverence created by the story, for the power and goodness of God to a trusting people.

The teacher must also avoid the use of an adult symbolism to teach spiritual truth. The child is not impressed with the thought of purity when he cuts out a lily, with the idea of peace when he draws a dove, or with the meaning of justice when he pastes a pair of scales. Lily, dove, and scales are merely lily, dove, and scales to him and nothing more. Many lessons in handwork for kindergarten children in the Sunday school have been based upon this false psychology which fails to take cognizance of the immaturity of the mental processes of the child.

To provide self-expression.—Every activity which provides a medium for the expression of thought and feeling should be used in the Sunday-school kindergarten in order to meet the need of all the children. As a rule they find expression through the hand more readily than through other mediums. Of course there are exceptions; but the rank and file love to paste, to crayon, and to fold, not only for the joy of doing but because they are telling something thereby.

When Viola crayons pink all over her paper and with a blissful smile states that she has made the sky "pinky and pretty" like it was last night; when Michael fashions out of clay a wee nest with three eggs in it such as the bluebird makes; when John builds a pen with a cover over the top where "sheeps and lambs" won't get lost, each one is expressing a value, a meaning, an idea, if you will,

that has gripped and demands utterance. The teacher finds out that which the child is thinking and feeling, and her next step in teaching is clearer. What the child expresses is impressed upon him because it is made visible, real, and clarified by the process. Other children share in the one child's insight and thus there is a gain for the group. Constructive imagination is greatly stimulated by free expression, and there is no function of the mind more important in the field of service.

To give social development.—Some of the handwork projects, such as the sand-table pictures and buildings made of the blocks, are engaged in by a group and worked out as a cooperative enterprise, giving opportunity for development in leadership and also in following. It is very desirable to use the handwork too as a means of stimulating service for others and unselfish giving. The child can take home what he makes as a gift for mother and father or for some other member of the family. He can make something for the little friend who is ill and absent, and later for the children in a near-by hospital or home or mission. So much is done for the child and there is so little that he can do for others that every opportunity should be embraced which offers practice and pleasure in serving.

MATERIALS AND TYPES OF WORK

Technical divisions.—The materials for manual activity are divided into two groups—play materials and handwork materials. In the former class are found those materials which are not changed or transformed in the process of the activity but

which in the end are as they were in the beginning. In the second class there are decided changes and transformations of material made. Blocks are play material, and there are many kinds, from the Froebelian blocks, which are the small kindergarten blocks in the boxes, to the Patty Hill Floor Blocks, from which houses, garages, wagons, and many other objects that children can play in, may be built. Montessori has originated three sets of blocks called the pink tower, the broad stair, and the long stair. The Hennessey blocks and the Peg-lock are still other varieties, while there are several more either on the public market or privately manufactured.

Many nature materials make good play materials, such as sticks, stones, flowers, cones, seeds, leaves, shells, berries, and nuts. Books and educative toys may be classed as play materials, especially toys like the doll and tiny housekeeping sets, animals, wagons, tops, balls, and tools.

The handwork materials may be subdivided, according to the process used, into three groups—plastic, industrial, and graphic. The plastic group includes clay, sand, and plasticene, the materials which are molded or modeled. The industrial group includes wood, paper, cardboard, and the textiles and all those types of work like weaving, cutting and sewing, and construction, which involve the process of taking apart and putting together. The graphic includes the crayon, paint, and charcoal used in depicting, decorating, or illustrating. One handwork project, however, may use materials from each group and demand accordingly all the processes suggested.

Bases for the selection of material.—In selecting materials for use with the kindergarten child it is essential that they are adapted to his capacities. He cannot work in metal, make complicated designs, write words, or do any difficult sewing, weaving, folding, or cutting. Much of the handwork taught in the kindergartens in the past and introduced into the church school has been so difficult that children of this age have not been able to accomplish any results without the teacher's help; in fact, the teacher has done often three fourths of the work and yet the child has been given the credit.

In addition to fitting the child's abilities, the handwork ought also to appeal to his interest. Dictated beauty designs with blocks may be well within the capacity of the five-year-old, but they are not especially interesting to him; neither are many of the patterns which he has been asked to fill in with crayon. The material which possesses the greatest possibilities for expression will hold the interest of the child longer and will develop him more than the material which has a very limited use. There is no chance of exhausting the number of objects that may be made from clay or the kinds of buildings that can be erected with the Hill blocks, while the possibilities of a peg board or of the Montessori cylinder insets are few in comparison.

Materials and tools must be large enough to avoid nerve strain. Fine pricking, folding, weaving, sewing, and stencil work, which were formerly very common in the kindergarten, called for the constant use of the accessory muscles at a time when

fundamental muscles are perfecting their coordinations and when the exercise of accessory muscles continuously causes nervousness. In order to give variety to handwork and thus hold interest and provide the child with a well-rounded development in manual activity, it is desirable to choose materials representative of the different groups so that there will be some modeling, some constructing, and some drawing.

Types of work adapted to the church school.— In the Beginners' Department some play materials can be used very helpfully to achieve the ends which have been suggested. There should be at least one set of floor blocks from which houses, a church, a wall, a sheepfold, a palace, and many other buildings used to illustrate stories or to provide setting for dramatization may be made. The Hennessey blocks are larger than the Froebelian blocks, they have a good variety of forms, can be used on the floor or on a large table, and yet are comparatively inexpensive.

All the nature materials available may be utilized in the season to which they are appropriate either as illustrative materials or as furnishing for the sand-table pictures, or as handwork materials. For instance, branches of bright-colored leaves may be brought in to decorate the room, to use in connection with fall stories and songs; a few of them can be used in the sand-table to suggest trees if a harvest scene is worked out there, or they may be paraffined by the teacher and used in leaf transparencies which the children take home as gifts. Gilded cones make lovely candle-holders at Christmas time; milkweed pods make charming boats

with a sail pasted in, and so do walnut shells; red berries such as the cranberry make pretty chains. An ingenious teacher can find many delightful ways in which to utilize these materials, and fine suggestions often come from the children.

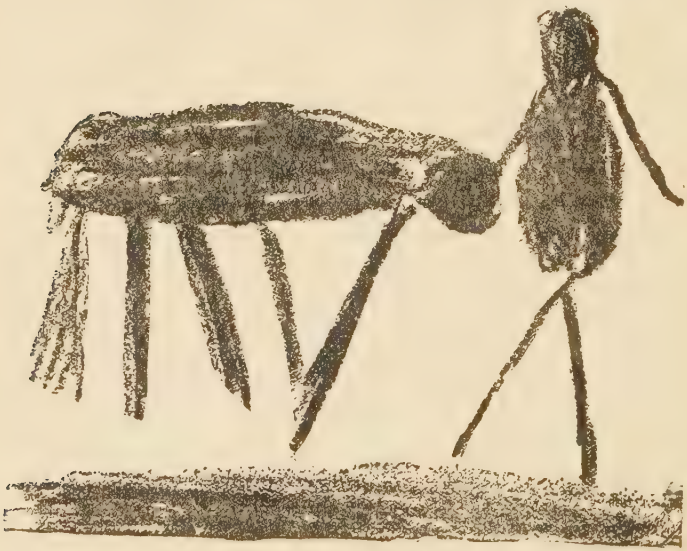
Probably the only toy that has a permanent place in the Beginners' Department is the doll or the doll family with the chairs to fit them and a carriage or cradle. The doll is a great comfort to the timid little girl who overcomes her fear of strange people and a strange room more quickly if she has something to mother and if she finds a dear, familiar object in the room. The doll can be used to practice proper care upon, for babies as well as dolls; and also to stimulate sharing, as there is only one, or at best two or three dolls and many little children. It motivates the lullabies and cradle hymns that are a rich musical heritage for this age group.

Small toys in celluloid or of other material impervious to water may be purchased for illustrative use in the sand-table, such as animals, people, fowls, dishes and utensils, conveyances or other objects needed from time to time. These toys can also be used nicely in connection with some of the block buildings. A few picture- and story books are especially enjoyed by the children who come early as one or two Bible-story books, a farm book, a travel book, and a book representing happy home and community experiences like the *Story Garden*, by Maude Lindsay.

Both clay and sand can be very successfully used by Beginners. Such objects can be made from the clay as cakes, leaves, fruits, vegetables, nests, bowls,

eggs, animals, and people. Simple stories can sometimes be illustrated by the making of three or four objects. Sand can be used where it is desirable to show a scene such as a farm or garden, or to make the setting for a story like that of "The Baby Moses," "The Lost Lamb" or "The Good Samaritan." The sand may be supplemented with the use of play toys, nature materials, or objects made from clay, paper, or wood.

Some simple paper-folding may be done for booklets, tents, boats, boxes, houses, picture frames, and similar objects. Very few folds can be used, and cutting must be added to produce the final result in most instances. Some construction work with or without paste has proved satisfactory also



JOSEPH AND THE DONKEY
(Child's drawing)

in making certain of the articles suggested. The booklet and the picture-frame require pictures. Mounting illustrations of the lesson story on a card or in the booklet or frame is one of the simplest and most successful of handwork projects. Very good illustrations of the Bible stories can be secured from the Perry or Brown firms, in the large size

THE GOOD SHEPHERD AND THE LAMB

or a small size called miniature. These pictures can be mounted without trimming or the children can cut away the white on the edges.

Of all the types of handwork, however, free-hand drawing is the most satisfactory; it provides self-expression in the fullest sense and is very easily

VISIT OF THE SHEPHERD TO THE MANGER

1 Sky
2 Star of Bethlehem
3 Shepherd
4 Lamb
5 Stable
6 Dog
7 Babe in Manger

handled. Painting, on the other hand, is more expensive and difficult to give and harder for the child to manipulate. He rarely has the oppor-

JACOB ASLEEP AT THE FOOT OF THE LADDER

tunity to paint at home, and if he does not attend kindergarten, it requires some practice before he uses brush and paint well enough to express himself easily with this medium. Single objects of every

description will be drawn by the kindergarten child and attempts will be made to relate some of these in pictures. Color will be used to represent sky, grass, earth, sunset, and water. Stories will be told with the crayon, and home and neighborhood experiences related.

Cutting and tearing of objects may be used also for illustration. Such objects may be mounted singly or related in story fashion. Cutting and tearing, however, are more difficult than the crayon for poster work and are not so effective when used by the kindergarten child. Whatever the type of handwork, it must be remembered that it has no place in Sunday school unless it illustrates, interprets, or expresses a fact, a truth, an ideal that is vital in arriving at the objective for that Sunday.

For further discussion:

1. Why does handwork make so strong an appeal to children?
2. How can the teacher make the satisfaction of the child in his handicraft contribute to his religious education?
3. Show how the child's experience in creating may help him to appreciate God's creation.
4. Analyze the mistakes made by well-meaning teachers in attempting to convey spiritual truth through the handwork lesson.
5. What is wrong with the lesson in which the child crayons, cuts out, or pastes a crown, a cross, a scepter, or some other symbol?
6. Suggest ten handwork projects for the Beginner in which the social motive would be dominant.

7. What materials are especially adapted to the capabilities and the interests of the five-year-old?

8. Why should the teacher avoid the use of very small materials and tools?

9. Make two lists—one of play materials, the other of handwork materials which you would choose for a Beginners' Department.

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CHAPTER XVII

TECHNIQUE OF A PROJECT

Meaning of "projects."—If "project" is defined as purposeful activity in a social setting, then all that has been suggested under story, picture, music, dramatization, conversation and prayer could properly fit into the project method. A real project involves child activity first of all, but it must be spontaneous, not forced activity, and it must be purposeful from the child's point of view, not aimless. It must also take place in a life situation and therefore possess a social significance.

A worthy project, be it the making of a boat, the dressing of a doll, the creating of a song, or the act of praying, engages the whole individual—attention, interest, memory, imagination, bodily skills. For the time being every other issue is forgotten. The test of the value of a project for the church school is the attitudes and appreciations which it creates and the knowledge and skills which it enables the child to gain. Are they sufficiently useful to justify the time spent upon the project? Do they enrich life, adding to its joy and its vision?

THE NATURAL DEVELOPMENT IN HANDLING MATERIALS

Experimental play.—It must not be forgotten that many of the tools and materials used in the Beginners' Department are new to the children when they first enter. The teacher cannot count

upon the home to have supplied the preliminary training in their use, and since the kindergarten is by no means available for every child, many children come to Sunday school without having handled clay, folded or cut paper, or done pasting. When these materials are first presented to the child he is filled with a natural curiosity and wants to experiment with them. Some opportunity should be given for such experimental handling either before Sunday school opens as the children gather or at a special table where the new children are placed. It is unfair to expect such a child to be interested immediately in some definite handwork project or to attain even the crude results of the child who has had some experience.

As the child manipulates a new material, be it sand, clay, or paper, he discovers the possibilities of the material and also its limitations, and he finds the process best adapted to its use. When children first handle sand, they let it slide through their fingers, they pile it up, try to tunnel through it, discover the objects that they can make in it and those that they can't make successfully. They discover also that they cannot move objects made of sand, as they can those made of paper or wood.

Experimentation with clay includes considerable poking, rolling, squeezing, and patting just to enjoy the feel of the material and the sense of power over it. Cutting in the beginning is also aimless from the standpoint of the result, mere manipulation of the scissors to get the use of the tool. Free-hand drawing with crayon, as a rule, gets results more quickly because most children have had pencils and paper at home. However, the color

may be a new medium, and the first drawings will be little more than scribbling or massing color over the paper, to get the effect of the different colors. Thus the child is seen to be gaining acquaintance with texture, color, form, process, and possibilities as he experiments. He is also gaining confidence in his own ability to handle this new tool or material.

Purposeful play.—As the four-year-old manipulates, however, he soon sees a likeness to some object or person or scene with which he is familiar in his work, or the teacher may see it and point it out to him. John has a small piece of clay which he has rounded in his manipulating. The teacher says, "See, children, John has made a ball." John looks and recognizes the form with delight. He then makes many other balls, little and big. He works now with a purpose; his project is to make balls for the approval of the teacher and the children. Mary is drawing with the crayon; she has covered the paper with red lines, when suddenly looking at them, she seems to see a house. She calls out: "I've made a house! See my house!" Now Mary works with painstaking effort; she is trying to make a better house. She has a purpose. It is to make a house that the other children will recognize.

As soon as the child realizes that he can make things, can depict for others to see, can get results that conform to objects in his environment, to images that he has acquired in past experience, purposeful activity begins. Some of his projects are suggested by the material itself, as is the case in the illustrations just given; others are his own idea, as may be true when he says, "I want some

clay; I'm going to make an apple." Again the teacher suggests a project to him when she asks, "How would you like to make a little present for mother's birthday?" Other children are often responsible. Robert has built a sheepfold; Kenneth wants to make one too. Whatever the source of the purpose, the important questions are, Has the child really embraced it? Is it his purpose? Does it so motivate his effort that what he is doing can truthfully be called a project?

The child's prerogative.—When the child has found his purpose, he should be given as much freedom as possible in planning and carrying out his project. Most of the manual projects of kindergarten children will be individual, in the sense that each child has a separate piece of work to take home, although very often the other children will have similar work, as for example, a drawing or a mounted picture or a nest made of clay. Lack of time and limited materials may make it impossible to offer the children more than one or two mediums from which to choose on a given Sunday. However, the way in which the child works, the individual touches even in the mounting of a picture, make for self-expression and real thinking on the child's part.

A group of half a dozen children had mounted "The Sistine Madonna" one Sunday morning. Each child had chosen his own mount from an assortment of construction paper in grays and blues. One child had folded his paper and pasted the picture inside, booklet fashion. Another child had pasted his picture in the center of the card and then folded the two sides over about an inch.

When opened out the folds made a little standing frame. A third child had trimmed his picture and pasted the name, carefully saved, on the back. Others had imitated some one of these styles, or simply pasted the picture neatly on the card. No two pictures, however, were exactly alike.

When a child meets an obstacle, the teacher should not rush in to his rescue. It is well to wait usually until he asks for help unless he is a timid child, easily discouraged. Obstacles challenge the child to think; they are productive of growth. The teacher ought to challenge the child with them instead of seeking to make the path too easy. When he has completed his project, he should criticize it himself. Is it entirely satisfactory? Could it be improved? Does it serve the purpose? Often the child has to have criticisms suggested to him through questions, but with the aid of his fellows he can, as a rule, tell rather accurately where he has succeeded and where he has failed.

TEACHER GUIDANCE

Preparation.—The room has to be arranged for the handwork or manual activity. If it is small, the tables had better be placed at one side or folded and stored in a closet until they are needed. If they are light, some of the children can be selected to set them in place. If they are heavy, the teacher and her assistants may place them. They should be so arranged that they will get good light but not bright sunshine; and sufficiently far apart so that the children in the various groups will not interfere with one another.

Six or eight children at a table is an ideal num-

ber, although ten or twelve can be accommodated if the table is large enough. The blocks are better used on the floor if the floor is clean, warm, and not drafty; the large floor blocks cannot be used on the table. The sand can be placed in a sand box that will set on a table, in individual sand pans or in a sand-table about which the children stand. The sand-table is the most desirable and the most expensive. After the children are seated about the tables with the assistant teachers, or while they are still in the larger group with the director of the department, the manual activity can be discussed and a decision reached as to what material each group or child will need to carry out the project in hand.

As the handwork is for the purpose of illustrating, interpreting, or expressing some fact, truth, or ideal that the teacher includes in her objective for the day, she will naturally have given the children through conversation, story, picture, observation, or song the background out of which the purpose for the manual activity will be derived. She needs now to see that the children evolve a worth-while project for themselves or that they adopt one which she suggests.

Distribution of material.—When the children are ready for the material, they can go to the cupboards for it, provided there are special cupboards for the children, low enough for them to reach and one such cupboard for each group. If, however, the cupboards are not well placed and the children cannot use them without crowding and confusion, one or two children can go and bring back the necessary materials in a box or basket. A

child can pass the materials, allowing each one at the table to choose in turn what he needs; or if the table is small, the box can be placed in the center and the children select from it. There should be an orderly way of giving out the material and the children should learn to be courteous in waiting for one another. This is one of the very good social situations of the morning where the habits of fairness and consideration for others may be cultivated.

The work period.—Because of the short time available in most of our Sunday schools for handwork, it is necessary that the process be short. The children should not, as a rule, attempt any project which cannot be finished within the period, as the kindergarten child does not readily hold his interest in a project through the days of the week until the next Sunday. The interest will have to be very keen if such is the case. No time should be wasted on the teaching of mere hand skill after the first experimentation with a new tool or material.

The technique of holding the crayon, the scissors, the brush and of making an exact fold should be shown the children by the teacher. This can best be done by explaining and at the same time using the tool oneself. There is a correct and an incorrect way of using every tool, and much time is saved if the child finds the correct way in the beginning. If the child needs help in his work in addition to instruction in the use of the tool, he should receive it through question and suggestion rather than by imitating the teacher or accepting her dictation. However, if the time is limited or the child nervous

or discouraged, it may be wise to show him how to overcome his difficulty rather than to wait for him to solve the problem.

In handling each material there are a few regulations that have to be worked out with almost every group of children. If clay properly moist is given to the children, they will not need to pound it in order to get the desired shape but should manipulate it in the hands until they get a fairly pliable mass. With thumb and fingers a receptacle —vase, basket, bowl, etc.—can be easily formed; or parts can be squeezed out to make ears, tail, legs for animals, stems for fruit, head, legs and arms for people.

The sand should be moistened so that it will hold its shape when modeled. The children must learn to be careful about spilling it on the floor, and they should never be permitted to throw it. If a project is being developed in the sand-table by a group, either one of the children or the teacher must act as leader and coordinate the work of the group. The teacher can through questions lead the children to decide what objects and scenes to include, where to place them, and who is to do each part of the work.

If paste is used for mounting pictures, it should be soft and smooth so that it will spread easily. Library paste can be prepared properly by stirring till the paste is creamy. Tooth-picks, paste slats or brushes may be used to spread it. If the children start to eat it because of the pleasant odor, the practice, of course, must be stopped at once. Very little paste should be taken at a time and it should be spread evenly on the corners of the picture.

If the child places the picture face down, this can be easily done. The picture should be pressed gently but firmly on the mount, not pounded.

In cutting, the child should be shown how to take even cuts and how to avoid chopping and haggling the paper. Heavy paper is difficult for little children to cut. There should be very little cutting on outlines, and where the outline is used it should be a heavy crayon line so that the child can readily see it, and it should be a very simple line with few irregularities. In folding, the child should learn to fold evenly edge to edge and to crease firmly with the thumb-nail. Mass work with the crayon produces better results than line drawing. If the paper covering is removed from the crayon and the child uses the side surface rather than the end, he will tend to work in mass.

When the blocks are used, the teacher will need to see that they are properly divided so that each child has a fair share if they are working as individuals. If the project is a group project, the teacher or a child must lead. As in the sand-table project, the teacher can by question have the children determine how the work is to be done and who is to be responsible for each part of it. A child leader will probably dictate to the other children the steps in the process. Blocks are noisy playthings and the children will have to practice carrying them carefully and placing them quietly, particularly if they use the large floor blocks. They must not try to take too many at a time, which is usually the besetting sin that brings the avalanche on the floor. Of course under no circumstances must blocks be knocked down or thrown. The

test of a building is its usableness and its stability. The children should apply this test to every structure.

The conclusion.—After the work is finished, the children and the teacher may criticize it. As far as possible this criticism should be drawn from the children themselves. The teacher must refrain from imposing adult standards of skill and perfection upon these little children. She must be satisfied with crude results if there has been maximum effort. However, she must never praise work that has been carelessly or slovenly done or that has not commanded the child's best effort. To do so is an injustice to him, as he does not work to capacity the next time and may also lose respect for the teacher's judgment. To every child who has tried, some appreciation should be expressed. What is good in his work should be brought out as well as the points where improvement can be made the next time.

If the project is one that can be used on completion, the opportunity should be given to the children to use it. They may run lightly with their pinwheels or with the butterflies or birds that they have made and attached to strings; they may show their pictures to each other; if they have made presents for father or mother, they may bestow them when their parents come into the room; if they have built a sheepfold from the blocks, they may get the toy sheep and shepherd and take them in and out the fold. The value of the lesson is deepened by this experience and the pleasure of the work is greatly increased.

Before going home if the handwork period comes

at the end of the morning, or before another activity intervenes, the children should put away the tools and materials which they have used. They should pick up waste papers and put the room in order. Much of the value of the period is lost if cleanliness, order, and neatness are not taught.

For further discussion:

1. What is a project? What test must be applied to it to justify its use in the church school?
2. Why is *experimental play* with materials necessary, and how may it be provided in the Beginners' Department?
3. Describe from observation the discovery of a purpose as the child plays with materials. What are the sources of purpose?
4. How much help should the teacher give the child in carrying out his purpose?
5. Criticize the following procedure in preparing for a handwork period: The tables are placed close together in a dark corner of the room; the paper, pictures and paste are brought by the teacher, one material at a time, from a distant cupboard; they are passed by the teacher to the children with no preliminary explanation of their use.
6. Why are projects which can be completed in one Sunday period desirable for beginners?
7. What are the relative values of imitation, dictation, and suggestion in teacher guidance? Where can each one be best employed?
8. Suggest the right way of handling clay, sand, paste, paper and crayon.
9. Do you agree with this statement: "The teacher should put away the handwork materials in an orderly way after the children have completed their work"?

10. When is criticism destructive?—constructive? Should the child's work always be praised?

11. Is it desirable for the child to use the object that he makes at Sunday school? Explain.

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CHAPTER XVIII

THE CLASS PROCEDURE

Characteristics of the session.—Whatever the activity or subject matter, there are certain attitudes and characteristics of atmosphere which should pervade the entire session. The children have the play attitude toward life; in fact, their life is play life. The teacher who would be successful in working with them must catch this play spirit, this joy in activity for its own sake. As soon as the work attitude is introduced, when conversation, song, or dramatization becomes a drill, the child's interest wanes and his attention wanders. The atmosphere should be happy, for children need happiness as much for physical, mental, and spiritual growth as plants need sunshine. No little child reveals himself freely in a sad or gloomy atmosphere; he is repulsed and chilled by it.

A happy atmosphere does not mean an hilarious or noisy one, however. Happiness is quite compatible with a quiet serenity that is not unchildlike but represents the seriousness of real play life. There should be freedom for individual expression and initiative controlled by group rules accepted by the children, not arbitrarily imposed by the teacher. And, most important of all, there should be reverence on the part of teacher and children for God and for that which is beautiful and good in their surroundings, including the personality of each one.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Cradle roll.—The Cradle Roll Department from which the little child is promoted into the Beginners' Department should have a very close relationship to the Beginners' Department. Kindergarten children are deeply interested in babies and small children of two and three. They readily assume a protective attitude toward them and like to do things for them. Moreover, such thoughtfulness and kindness as they can exercise toward younger children are most helpful in their own social development.

The Cradle Roll superintendent should give the names of new babies to the Beginner superintendent as soon as she receives them and the Beginner superintendent may hold a brief welcome service for them. A wall frame can be purchased or made in which the cards with the names of Cradle Roll babies may be inserted, or a little cradle may be used to which the cards can be tied with tiny pink and blue ribbons—blue for baby boys, pink for baby girls. The latter device delights the kindergarten child who loves to rock the cradle and sing a lullaby. There are special Cradle Roll songs and many other charming lullabies from which selections may be made.

The occasion of the service will be an opportunity for the teacher to talk about the characteristics of the baby that puzzle the kindergarten child, such as pulling hair and throwing playthings, and also to discuss the care of the baby and the part the kindergarten child may take in that care when he has a baby at home. Pictures of babies may

be shown and the children may tell anecdotes about their babies. Occasionally a Cradle Roll mother may bring in a baby or small child for a part of the service, and the children will have a chance to observe the baby, to be careful not to frighten him, and to be patient and careful if he comes to sit or march with them. An entirely different attitude has often been created in the kindergarten child toward younger children by these services.

Birthdays.—Almost every week in a large department some one or more little children have birthdays. The child's birthday is very precious to him; it is a mark of his individuality, the one festival of which he is the center. Unfortunately, the kind of attention which he receives at home often renders him selfish and self-seeking and gives him a false idea of his importance. The church-school teacher has a wonderful opportunity in the birthday service to get close to the child, to call to his attention the significant advances in his growth with the additional chances for helpfulness that they bring, and also to let him share his happiness with others.

The children enjoy guessing whose birthday it is, and if they scan the faces of their neighbors, they can usually detect the tell-tale grin or in a burst of enthusiasm the birthday child will rise or wave his hand. How old he is can be told certainly when he drops his pennies in the basket; and the birthday pennies should be consecrated to a special purpose, helping some little child of kindergarten age whose story the children all know, and whose photograph they have seen. After the pennies

have been counted, the children may sing the birthday song:

"Happy birthday we will sing you;
Many wishes we will bring you;
We will light the candles gay,
For you are five years old to-day."
—*Songs for the Little Child.*[1]

If the candle-lighting is carefully handled, there need be no danger in it, and there is no other custom which gives the child the same amount of pleasure. Tiny birthday tapers may be used with little holders that will set on a low table in front of the teacher. If holders cannot be purchased, little clay balls flattened at the bottom and shellacked make an excellent substitute. As each candle is lighted, an appropriate comment may be made by the teacher or children concerning what Bobby could do when he was one year of age, two years, three years, and what he can do now.

When the candles are all lighted, the birthday child may choose a favorite song for the group to sing or the birthday song may be used again. He may then bring little friends, one by one, to the table to blow out the candles. As each little friend blows out the candle, he makes a wish for the birthday child and failing any original thought he simply says, "Happy birthday." After the wishes have been given, the children may gather about the birthday child and the teacher, and together they can formulate a little prayer for him, asking God to care for him and to help him to be a strong boy and good helper. Then one of the children

[1] Used by permission of author and The Abingdon Press.

may select a birthday card or other little gift for him. The birthday child has given the group happiness and they have had to inhibit a great desire to be doing all the things that he does.

The following little story is a reproduction of what happened at the birthday service in a certain church school. Billy, the birthday boy, was six, and he chose Budsy, his best friend to blow out the first candle. Budsy said generously, "Don't you want to blow it out, Billy?" Billy insisted that Budsy do the blowing. A little later Budsy was heard to remark *sub rosa,* "Say, Billy, I'll blow out the other five if you want me to." As the candles are blown, Budsy keeps telling Billy, "Now you're five, now you're four, now you're three, now you're two—watch out you'll soon be one." When the group came together for prayer and the teacher asked what they wished God to do for Billy, Budsy said, very earnestly, "I know that Billy would like one of those engines," and he proceeded to describe it in detail. Thomas spoke up, "I want to give Billy a present now." The teacher suggested finding something in the room, and Thomas mentioned the flowers and picked out a beautiful purple tulip which he handed to Billy. "Thank you," said Billy.

"Much obliged," replied Thomas, gravely.

Collection.—There is no more important part of the program than the giving service. Opportunity should be afforded the child from time to time to give toys, clothing, books, and food in addition to money. These material blessings mean more to the kindergarten child than pennies, nickels, or dimes. Money does have, however, a value to

him because of the recognition which it receives in the home and its purchasing value in the shops with which he has had some experience.

For his gift in the church school to bring him the greatest good in the development of a habit of cheerful giving and a charitable and sympathetic attitude toward all who need, he must understand to whom he is giving and why. Kindergarten children often have the vaguest notions on this subject. One child when questioned said that he brought his pennies for God, that God came after the church school was over and took them, and that he bought bread and milk with them. Another child was under the impression that Jesus received them from the postoffice. Still other children think that the "Poor Children" who do not represent any real children with specific needs, are the recipients. The teacher should tell the children in detail, with the help of pictures, the story of any worthy cause that she thinks suitable for kindergarten children to help. A few carefully selected causes, possibly not more than two, with definite contrast, are sufficient for the year.

After the children have heard the story they can discuss how to meet the need, whether it be an orphanage, a day nursery, a mission kindergarten, or a babyfold that has been presented to them. Then the teacher can ask, if they do not propose it themselves, whether or not they would like to give their money to buy the milk, the fruit, toys, stockings, or other articles. If they agree to do so, then the teacher should get into communication with the charity in question and establish a bond of interest between the two groups of children.

The children may send letters which are dictated to the teacher and which go with the money or gifts; if a photograph be taken of them, they can send a copy of it and samples of some of their work.

The children to whom the gifts go should respond either through letters sent by their teacher or superintendent, or through pictures of themselves and samples of their work. It must be remembered that the poor as well as the rich need to do for others, and that both groups are best helped by building up a reciprocal relationship. It should not occur to the wealthier group to patronize or to consider itself better than the poorer group—such an attitude is distinctly unchristian. Little children need appreciation, the knowledge of having given happiness in order to develop the helping spirit and the habit of giving. Each time the collection is taken there should be a discussion of the cause and some added bit of information, so that every service shall have meaning.

A child can be chosen to gather the money in a basket or the children may march past the basket and drop the money in. They can then participate in some other rhythms before they go to their seats. It isn't necessary to count the money every time, but it is well to do so occasionally. The children enjoy the counting and the different coins can be noted and the total amount emphasized and what it will purchase. The children may count together, or one child may count the pennies, another the nickels, a third the dimes. This gives opportunity for taking turns and a chance for choice, as it is desirable to let the children choose those who do the counting. A prayer for the chil-

dren to whom the money is sent may complete the little service.

Festivals.—Festivals or special days need some recognition in the session, such as Rally Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Washington's Birthday, Easter, Memorial Day, Children's Day, and the Fourth of July. The patriotic days need not be given consideration unless they fall on the day when the class meets, but the other occasions have a real significance for little children.

On Rally Day emphasis should be placed on the greeting of new and old members who have entered the church school. The total number of children present may be counted and recognized by clapping. An opportunity can be given the children to tell of their summer pleasures. The day needs to be a particularly attractive one so that all the children will want to attend regularly. For Thanksgiving the room can be decorated with leaves, a yellow pumpkin or two, and chrysanthemums or other bright fall flowers. The children may bring fruits or vegetables for the orphanage or mission which they are helping. Each one may march with his gift and pile it in the big basket in the center of the circle. A letter may be dictated by the children to go with the basket, and a program of appropriate songs, story, and handwork may follow. The Christmas Festival has been suggested under "Dramatization."

The decoration for patriotic days may be the flag, and the program may include patriotic songs for children, including one stanza of "America," a story about soldiers or sailors, a march in which each child carries a flag and the making of a soldier

cap or some little decoration. The aim for the day is to create a love for the flag and a respect for the soldier, not as a fighter, but as a protector.

On Easter Sunday, flowers including an Easter lily provide the setting for emphasizing the return of life in the spring, and a group of spring songs, a story, and appropriate dramatization and handwork, furnish the program. If flowers are plentiful so that each child may bring one or more or a potted plant for the children whom they are helping, there can be a beautiful festival march and rhythm period in which each child carries his own flowers and finally places them in a lovely basket. A letter can be written on this occasion also.

The Children's Day program will probably be given by the entire church school or at least by the elementary division, and the Beginners' Department may make a small contribution in the nature of songs, verses or an informal dramatization. Individual children must not be singled out for attention in a strange room with all the distractions of an adult audience. The nervous strain and the danger of self-consciousness for the child are out of all proportion to the gain for the rest of the school. The group, however, can safely try a song or verse with which they are very familiar and they are happy to have a part in the bigger whole.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Balance of activities.—In working out a schedule for class procedure it is well to remember that all the activities and all the subject matter is for the purpose of developing in the children a love for

God and neighbor which shall evidence itself in their thinking, feeling, and acting. There is necessarily no fixed place for any activity, and in the expression of a single truth, song, conversation, picture, story, dramatization may be utilized. Handwork often provides the setting for dramatization, the illustration for story or song, the justification for much conversation and for the use of pictures. The schedule first of all should be elastic then.

In the second place there will not always be a story or handwork or dramatization, a birthday celebration or a Cradle Roll service; but there will always be music, rhythm, conversation, prayer, a collection. Conversation and song will take place many times in the session; there will be some conversation, in fact, with every other activity. Prayer may occur once or several times as special opportunities or needs present themselves. Activities such as conversation, picture study, story-telling, and prayer should alternate with bodily activities such as rhythm, dramatization, and handwork.

There should be provision for a rest or quiet period if the session is long and the children seem to need it. Such rest can be taken sitting quietly in chairs or on the floor with feet and hands relaxed, listening to a lullaby or instrumental music. There should be no forcing about the rest period but the mood should be created by a few words from the teacher and the music. It best follows vigorous activity.

Time allotment.—As some church schools have a two-hour or an hour-and-a-half session and others

an hour session, a time schedule for the hour session is suggested with the idea that certain periods such as the manual activity can be considerably lengthened where the time warrants. The children arrive, as a rule, from fifteen to twenty minutes before the formal opening. This time should be utilized for acquainting the children with the teachers and other children, for looking at pictures and books, for arranging flowers and folding story papers, for giving new children an opportunity to handle some of the tools and materials to which they are not accustomed.

The hour may open with a brief rhythm period, lasting not more than five minutes, which serves to rest the children who have been sitting and to bring the group together and open the way for further expression. The rhythms may be followed by ten minutes or less devoted to greeting. There may be a formal greeting song and some handshaking; there should always be a recognition of each individual child with joy that he is there; the children and the teacher may contribute, as they wish, bits of experience from the week just past and songs that they wish to sing alone or with the group. This is "getting acquainted" time, the opportunity for sharing the significant happenings of the week. The collection should occur next, in order to take care of troublesome coins which are beginning to escape pockets and handkerchiefs. The collection and rhythms in connection will occupy at least ten minutes.

If there is a birthday or Cradle Roll addition, this service will take five minutes. Fifteen minutes should be given to the story and related picture

study, singing, dramatization, and worship, the story occupying possibly five minutes of the time. The manual activity needs more than fifteen minutes, but on an hour's schedule can scarcely have it. An informal dismissal does not take time out of the session but permits children to get their wraps at the close of the handwork period, and to receive the good-by greeting of the teacher and the story paper at the door.

A DESCRIPTION OF ONE SESSION

The morning of this description is a real session in a certain Beginners' Department. There has been no other quite like it and there will not be another that repeats it, for there are several variables in the situation. The group is never the same. Very rarely are all the children present, and every session sees new faces in the ring and new names on the register. Moreover, no little child is ever the same two days in succession. He is a growing child and therefore a changing child. Since this particular department seeks to accept the contribution of every child as well as the contribution of the teacher, to stimulate self-expression and the cooperation of all in the group, it is evident that the program must always vary.

The room.—If you had glanced in the kindergarten room about ten o'clock on this particular morning, you would have found it spotlessly clean, with fresh air blowing in a half-open window, and the sunshine streaming through the stained glass. The comfortable little chairs are already arranged in a circle and some of them are placed at the low, round tables. There are permanent pictures on

the wall, "Jesus Blessing Little Children," "The Good Shepherd," and "The Christ-child," and in the window a few incidental pictures of the robin and other early spring birds. On a little tabaret is a vase of beautiful butterfly sweet-peas of a delicate pink.

Before the session.—And here the children come! The room is soon filled with them. Mothers and fathers come with them, and stop to help until the wraps are safely hung on little hooks in the clothes' closet. Soon there are several busy groups about the low tables, folding the little story papers which are taken home at noon, looking at pictures, or telling the week's experiences to a sympathetic teacher. Mary and Barbara have the precious news of a new baby at their house, Kenneth has a song that he can hardly wait to sing, and Thomas has a whole pocket full of treasures, little and big gunboats and a pair of pincers which make his pocket a rendezvous of interest until the teacher sees fit to place these treasures in a drawer for safe keeping.

Rhythm.—Presently the pianist takes her place, and the teachers and children find theirs in the big circle. At the first sound of the piano comes the stamping of little feet upon the floor, the favorite and therefore the first response to this stimulus. Then follow numerous spontaneous suggestions as to what to do next—tapping toes, tapping heels, sliding feet, clapping hands. Even the quietest and most timid child feels the impulse to participate and is drawn irresistibly into the group by this participation.

Sharing experiences.—When everyone has had

an outlet for pent-up activity and feels himself a member of the group, the teacher asks for songs and is almost overwhelmed by the voluble response. A little boy sings "Rock-a-bye Baby" so softly that only a few hear, but they appreciate his song, and presently the whole group is singing, rocking back and forth, mother-fashion, in their chairs.

The teacher says a few words about the care of babies when little Barbara who has never sung for the children before catches sight of a robin in the window and sings, "Oh, I am robin redbreast." All the children love that song and have to sing it, especially when some of them have seen and heard robins this very morning. Marcia thinks of another robin song and her true little voice rings out each tone. With her help that song is added to the repertoire. Then Thomas, who is wonderfully suggestible, sings a song that he just makes up as he goes along. It has no particular tune but it tells of baby birds and nests and mother birds and it ends by asking God to care for baby birds in their nests at night. The little stimulus of bird pictures in the window has fulfilled its mission; it has brought the desired reaction. These children have felt and expressed their joy in the first sign of spring.

The collection.—By the restlessness of the group and the frequent dropping of money on the floor the teacher is reminded that it is time to take up the collection. She asks that every pocket be searched by its small owner, handkerchiefs untied, and purses opened before the children reach the basket in order that every penny be gleaned for the children of the Italian Mission. The pictures

of the Italian church and children have been shown so that every child knows what he is bringing his money for. The children march around the room to the delightful rhythm of the piano, and each child, even the smallest and most timid, enjoys that important moment when he drops his coin in the basket.

The march is followed by a gallop which Junior requests and by a run on tiptoe. Then a voice suggests that the children play "cop," and when asked what he has in mind, the small boy outlines a thrilling game in which several policemen catch bad people and put them in jail. He is to be the jailor. The teacher tactfully explains that this game would frighten the smaller children, and all are soon happily skipping, that activity without which no session would be perfect.

A birthday.—After so much exercise the children sit very quietly and listen with much pleasure to the music played for their appreciation. When the music is finished, a certain little girl remembers that she is just four. Her mother is present and has the birthday pennies. Four tiny tapers are lighted and shine while fifty pairs of eyes are glued upon them and fifty voices unite in the birthday song. Then the little girl finds four children to blow out her candles and somebody thinks it would be nice to give her a pink sweet pea. While she holds it in her hand, the children close their eyes, at least most of them do, and ask God to take care of the birthday child, to give her a happy birthday, and please to take care of all the children and help everybody to be good. Some little voices trail along after others have finished and the teacher waits quietly until every petition has been made.

The story period.—Junior has asked for a story, so the children bring their chairs and place them before the story-teller. They recall some of the stories about the baby Jesus and the boy Jesus which they have had since Christmas, and then Hofmann's picture of the man Christ is shown, and the story is told of the many people whom Jesus helped to be well; of the paralytic who was let down through the roof, of the little daughter of Jairus, of blind Bartimæus who called by the roadside. The children reach out eagerly for the pictures that illustrate these scenes; they hold them in their hands and their faces are full of sympathy. Stephen remarks that he would have helped the lame man to get to Jesus if he had been there, and Marcia tells about the blind boy at school. Somebody mentions the doctors that help people to get well, and the teacher says that they, like Jesus, often ask God the Father to help when people are very sick.

Finally the question arises as to what the children can do to help little children who are sick. Billy thinks that they can give money to pay the doctor, Ruth Ann says that at Bethany they send flowers. The children decide to give the pink sweet peas. Then the suggestion is made that they draw some pictures for the sick children to look at. This idea is quickly seized; everybody goes to the tables and draws very rapidly.

Handwork.—All kinds of spring flowers go into the pictures, and robins, trains, houses, and many other things. Some of the pictures are quite clear; others are a mere jumble of dots and lines and blotches of color, but all are presented with beam-

ing faces; and all are accepted with gratitude by the teacher, in behalf of the sick children.

Dismissal.—The doors open, fathers and mothers pour in, hats and coats are quickly found. Everybody laughs to see a big brother sitting on the piano stool while he puts galoshes on a little brother whose feet are on his lap and whose head is on the floor. Finally all are clothed for the out-of-doors and set off after bidding the teachers good-by at the door. It is a guess as to whether the teacher or the story paper is the attraction which makes it impossible to get one child out until he has stopped for his handshake and paper. All mornings are different, but there is never one that is not happy and that does not richly repay in fellowship with these little children of whom the Master said, "Of such are the kingdom of heaven."

For further discussion:

1. What is the play attitude and how should it function in a Beginners' Department?
2. Give an illustration of how teacher and children may develop together rules essential to the control of the group.
3. Characterize the atmosphere essential to child growth.
4. What, in your estimation, is the value of the Cradle Roll service to the Beginner child? to the mother of the Cradle Roll baby? to the church?
5. Suggest ways in which the birthday service may be varied to keep the interest of the children.
6. How may giving be made real or vital to little children?
7. Criticize the old-fashioned Sunday-school program

from the standpoint of the child. Suggest a desirable substitute.

8. What is meant by "a balance of activities"?

9. How may the teacher wisely determine the amount of time to be devoted to each activity?

10. Make a report on the observation of a Beginner session, evaluating carefully the activities and their organization.

For further reading:

Baker, Edna Dean, *The Beginners Book in Religion*, Chapters III and V. The Abingdon Press, 1921.

Lewis, Hazel A., *How to Conduct a Beginners Department*, Chapters IV to XI. The Standard Publishing Company, 1918.

Rankin, Mary Everett, *A Course for Beginners in Religious Education*, page 33, "A Suggested Program." Charles Scribner's Sons, 1917.

CHAPTER XIX

CURRICULUM MATERIAL

Necessity for curriculum material.—In addition to atmosphere and example, the child needs information in forming those attitudes, appreciations, and ideals which should carry over into the conduct that makes for Christian character. He is born, we believe, with the capacity to love God, but he needs our help in finding him. Since the beginning of time God has been revealing himself to the children of men. Consider the ages that passed before Jesus came and how far men still were then from the conception of God as a Father, and how far millions of men in Christian countries to-day are from the realization of that Fatherhood in the brotherhood of man! If the race progresses as it should toward the kingdom of heaven of which Jesus spoke, where the principles of Christianity control all the relationships of men, then we must share with every wondering little child according to his capacity to receive and assimilate and apply our accumulated knowledge of God the Father and his purpose for human life.

Food for physical growth is not more necessary than food for religious growth. "Without vision the people perish" is as true of child as of adult religious development. How shall this information be given? Much of it informally in conversations about nature and common human experiences,

much of it in reply to the questions of the children. Our instruction ought not to cease here, however; the child is entitled to all the knowledge that he can understand and appreciate from the experiences of the patriarchs, the singers and prophets of Israel, from the wonderful life of the Master, and from the lives of those in every century who have applied the principles of Christianity.

It is the most natural thing in the world for the child to love God, but he cannot love him unless he knows him. He would not love his own father if that father were unknown. Having come to know and love God, he must have expression for that love in service, for the love of God includes the love of his creation and should act as a powerful dynamic in developing moral-social habits. Again the lesson story must point the way and the conversation which follows give opportunity to tell of services performed in the child's sphere and to plan suggested lines of activity.

CRITERIA IN JUDGING

Interests of children.—In judging the value of curriculum material a first test is whether or not it meets the child's interests. What is a child from four to six interested in? First and foremost in doing things, in activity. He, therefore, is chiefly attracted to the active part of creation: to animals, fowls, birds of every description, butterflies, bees, babies, children, men and women engaged in conspicuous physical occupations, such as pounding, driving, sewing, rowing, and the like, to moving mechanisms like trains, boats, street-cars, aero-

planes. He is also attracted to glitter and vivid color, and to noise.

When, therefore, a red bird such as the Kentucky cardinal flies and can be heard singing, or a yellow street-car rumbles down the track, or a little girl in blue comes skipping and calling down the street, the combination is ideal to win attention. The uniform, the equipment, of soldier, policeman, sailor, and fireman, coupled with their striking work, greatly appeal. Flowers, because they have bright color and sweet odor; food, because it has taste and odor; soft, furry things pleasant to touch; fire, bright and flickering and dangerous —all of these and any other thing that charms the senses define the leading interests of childhood. The world of concrete things, of reality, of the here and now, is the world of the child, and his interests indicate the horizon of his understanding and the extent of his need.

Child understanding.—A certain course of lessons for Beginners features the topic "The Church" and under this "The Altar," "The Builded Church," "Going to Jerusalem." Such study of organized worship, of the church as an institution cannot be comprehended by the child, does not interest him, and fails to meet his need, which is not to know the formalized religion of man but the God of love who has made his bright, glowing world. It is desirable that he should love and reverence the church, but this he will do much more readily by associating the building with the happy times he spends there and with the hymn which invites fathers, mothers, and little children to come within the wide-open doors. A picture of their church

was thrown on the screen for kindergarten children of a certain church school, developing love for the church by this method. There was an instant cry of "Our church, our church!" and several ran forward to pat the picture tenderly until the teacher called them back.

Another course for Beginners includes several lessons on heaven. To be sure, there are occasionally little children who come seeking for information about death and immortality. The story is told of the little girl whose plant withered and who came to her mother with the anxious query, "Where is my plant?" The mother replied that it had died and she had taken it to the basement. "But I want to know," the child continued, "where my plant is?" She was seeking to solve the mystery of the disappearance of life. The question was the mother's opportunity to show the child the wonderful transformations of nature in which no atom of life is lost.

When such questions come inspired by the withering of a flower, the loss of a pet, the death of a parent or a playmate, the little child must be comforted by some assurance of immortality which he can understand. In the normal child life, there is, however, only a remote interest in the hereafter; this present life stretches on in an interminable succession of days, and the activities of to-day occupy all the powers and all the thought. Why should the topic "heaven," then, have a place in the lesson course? A consideration of it is likely either to terrify the child with the fear of an immediate separation from his loved ones to this remote place of bliss, or he scorns the joys

of life here and now and longs for a quick transportation. "But I want to go to heaven right this minute," said a little boy of five. The need of the child is to learn how to live happily and helpfully to-day, how to find the kingdom of heaven in this world.

Religious needs.—The criteria for judging the curriculum material from the child's viewpoint then include the appeal to interest, the approach to understanding, and the response to religious need. His need is to know and love God according to his capacity, to know and love his creation according to capacity, and to acquire the skills and habits that make for Christian conduct in a kindergarten child. This statement of need has been further defined by listing the specific attitudes and appreciations, skills, and habits that the kindergarten child should and can acquire during the two years that he is in the department if the program of religious education is rightly planned and carried out.

Demands of society.—If the curriculum material is selected with the idea of meeting the need of the child fully, not as an individual only but as a member of society, then the demands of society are met in the choice as well as the need of the child. There is no conflict between the needs of the child and the needs of the race, for the child will never find happiness or the development of his possibilities for greatest usefulness unless his adjustment to society, which in the large sense includes God, is right. The more nearly perfect the working relationship of the individual to all other life, the more satisfying and fruitful are his

days. Therefore the curriculum material may be criticized upon the basis of its serviceableness in orientating the child with his world, in helping him to be a true little brother in the society in which he lives now.

Accuracy and beauty.—There are two other tests that should be applied to curriculum material. Does the nature material and other fact material introduced from time to time possess scientific accuracy? Many Sunday-school stories have either ignorantly or intentionally altered facts, especially about natural phenomena, for the purpose of developing the lesson more successfully. Such a practice is wrong because it misleads the child and confuses him greatly later in his scientific studies.

A second question should be asked concerning the worth of the music, the literature, the pictures provided. Is the form technically beautiful? Is it the best material for the purpose that can be secured? No language can be too beautiful, no art too perfect, to express our conception of God or of the great religious ideals. The surpassing beauty of the King James version of the Bible, the loveliness of form in which the poets of the race have put their great messages to the spirit of man, should be our standard. A series of lessons for kindergarten children must use simple language and form, but it need not be cheap or commonplace or incorrect. Little children feel the appeal of beauty fitted to their appreciation even more perhaps than does the adult. A certain minister once said that he never knew what nature could mean to the human spirit until he saw his little daughter literally throw herself upon her knees as

she caught the vision of moonlight on the water or of sunset in the northern sky.

ORGANIZATION

Types.—In organizing curriculum material into a definite course of study mistakes have been frequently made. A logical organization beginning, as the old botany used to do, with the roots in the study of the plant, while it might greatly appeal to the mature botanist, is either lost upon the child or alienates his interest. To what is he chiefly attracted? The gay, sweet flower, if the plant has one, and next in order the bright green leaves.

The principle that should prevail, then, is the psychological, beginning at the place of greatest interest and working from that which is known and understood to that which is little known or unknown. Many lesson series for the kindergarten child start at the home and use as setting the familiar home scenes and activities. Another mistake in organizing material for children is to use the chronological order. An illustration of this is to introduce the story of "The Garden of Eden" first, for no other reason than that it occupies the first place in the Bible. The child has no conception of distance or time and hence such a scheme of organization is of no service to him except that the stories may fail to win interest because of their remoteness and strangeness.

Florence Palmer tells of a little girl whose father said to her, "I am going to New York and then across the ocean." "Father," she questioned, "will you drive old Doll?" She had travelled but a few miles from the town in which she was born

and had always ridden in the carriage. The same author tells of another child who tried in vain to realize when her birthday would come but was unsuccessful until she came within two "sleeps" of the day.

Centers of interest.—If the psychological organization is used, the material may be grouped under interesting centers or topics of interest, beginning with that topic which the past experience of the children or the present season and home and community activity will give the major chance of attracting attention and interest and securing the desired results in habit formation. The topics should be so related one to another that the transition in the progress from one to another will be naturally made, both from the standpoint of understanding and feeling. They should be so related also to the developing religious experience which they seek to nourish that they will supply at each stage of growth what is needed.

Within the topic or center of interest there may be material enough for one or several class periods. No matter how wise the author has been in suggesting the time limits for each division in her course, the teacher will still have to adapt to her own group. Foreign-born children will progress much more slowly than American-born, and children from homes of culture more swiftly than those from homes of ignorance.

Daily preparation.—In preparing the material for the use of the class the teacher will need each time to outline in her own thought or on paper a plan that will include her aim for that day. What information should the child gain, what attitudes

and appreciations, what habits? Exactly what activities will she use to accomplish these results and what will be the technique in presentation?

It is spring. The teacher wishes to have the children learn to care for living things. She has selected as her curriculum material for this particular day the birds. What information about the birds do the children need in order to inspire a feeling of love for them and an attitude of protection? They need to know about their nesting habits and their young; they need to know what the birds eat and where they find their food in the neighborhood; they need to know about their baths; they need to know about the harmful insects that they destroy, and about the pleasure they give with their songs and beautiful plumage. What should the children do to help the birds? They can put up houses for them, put out strings and other material for their nests, prevent them from being destroyed by cats and dogs who don't understand, and supply them with food and water for drinking and baths. What are the activities for the presentation of this information and the acquiring of the necessary skills and habits? Observation of birds and their habits, pictures, stories, songs, conversation, and handwork. In thinking over the activities suggested the teacher decides upon the technique of presentation, or the procedure in the use of each activity.

Actual use.—When the children are present and the time has arrived for the use of the carefully prepared material the teacher must forget the plan as a plan, the material as something which must be served whether the guests show an appetite or

no. She is in the presence of life full of question, full of suggestion, full of movement. Of all that they have been observing, feeling, thinking, doing since she saw them last, is there any more pertinent interest, is there any more imperative need? If so, new material must be found to enrich and enlarge experience, different activities used and possibly a variation in technique. At any rate the teacher has to accept the contributions of the children, large or small, and she must constantly adapt her material, changing and modifying, as she gets the reactions of her group. Each response from them shows the next step.

Even the aim may change; it may be learning to care for bunnies instead of for birds or it may shift entirely to the expression of love and gratitude for spring clothes. If, however, the teacher is inexperienced, she may wisely follow her plan, keeping at least her principal objectives and activities in mind. The teacher of experience will not make radical changes after careful preparation unless she is reasonably sure that she is choosing the psychological moment for meeting some important religious need.

AVAILABLE COURSES OF STUDY

Uniform and graded.—There are three types of lesson material in use for Beginners. There are the *uniform lessons*, which many church schools follow. They provide the same material with little exception for the entire school. It is very clear that lessons selected to interest adolescents or adults would not interest or fit the need of Beginners. Even the attempt to adapt the presentation for

different age groups fails to make the material suitable.

Then there are the *graded lessons*, prepared by the International Lesson Committee, a series of topics chosen with reference to the understanding and needs of the different age groups in the church school. The various denominations have selected their own writers to develop the topics into lesson courses for the departments, known as the Berean Series, the Keystone Series, the Pilgrim Series, the Westminster Series. The point of view in developing graded material is the right point of view, and the Beginners' Course in the main is within the comprehension of the kindergarten child. However, the course for each of the two years, is too full. It contains too many stories, does not allow for enough repetition, includes many Bible stories that are advanced for the Beginner and had better be presented later like "The Story of Jonah," "The Story of Adam and Eve," "The Flight of the Israelites out of Egypt," "The Story of Ishmael," "Jesus and the Heavenly Home," and others. There is too much biblical material in proportion to nature, home, and community stories interpreting the child's daily life.

Textbooks.—The third type of material is the *textbook of religion*. Some of these are denominational and others, undenominational. While varying somewhat in the statement of purpose and widely in the material selected, these texts are all printed and bound in substantial book form, intended for the teacher only, as, of course, the kindergarten child cannot read his own text. The book form, the use of chapter headings, the inclusion of an

introduction on child psychology and method in teaching in some of the texts—all of these features serve to give these books greater respect and value. The denominational series more readily fall into the error of emphasizing the dogma or creed of the church or the symbolism for which the kindergarten child is not ready. Differentiations into creed come much later; Beginners the world over need the same fundamental religious nurture. Prominent texts are:

The Beacon Press (Unitarian): *The Little Child in the Sunday School.* Lillian B. Poor and Clara T. Guild.

Chicago Constructice Series (Undenominational): *The Sunday Kindergarten.* Ferris.

Christian Nurture Series (Episcopalian): *The Fatherhood of God.* Authors not announced.

Charles Scribner's Sons (Undenominational): *A Course for Beginners in Religious Education.* Mary Everett Rankin.

The Abingdon Press (Undenominational): Week Day Series. *The Beginners Book in Religion.* Edna Dean Baker.

Adaptation.—In using any one of the series named the teacher should make a careful examination of the statement of purpose, of the material selected, of the organization, and the teaching suggestions. She should subject each to the criticism of the principles evolved from the study of the little child, and of the art of teaching. She should be free to eliminate material that is not suitable to kindergarten children in general or to her particular group, to change the organization, and, in short, to adapt the curriculum to the needs

of the children she is teaching. She should be familiar with the best material in other series and in the bibliographies referred to in the study of the various activities in this text. She should be able to enrich the material of her church series from these other sources or make desirable substitutions. Her creed should be: "Always the best that I am able to provide for the children of this church school."

For further discussion:

1. What curriculum material is needed by the child who strikes his neighbor? the child who says, "I don't like rain"? the child who is greedy?
2. Suggest five topics in which the child would not be interested.
3. Can a little child understand the trinity, the Lord's Supper, the transfiguration? Explain.
4. How would you reconcile the needs of the child and the needs of society? Is it possible to satisfy both?
5. Criticize the following verse:

"When he cometh, when he cometh, to make up his jewels,
All his jewels, precious jewels, his loved and his own.
Like the stars of the morning his bright crown adorning,
They shall shine in their beauty, bright gems for his crown."

6. How would you answer the child who asks, "When is next week?" or the one who says, "I walked a hundred miles this morning!"? What application have these remarks to the organization of a program?
7. Using the psychological organization, select a series of five topics suitable for the spring season and outline each one suggesting aims, subject matter and activities, and method of presentation.

8. Give an illustration showing how the teacher may utilize the children's contributions in developing subject matter.

9. Choose any one of the current series of lessons for the Beginners' Department and criticize it from the standpoint of the interests and needs of the child.

For further reading:

Baker, Edna Dean, *The Beginners Book in Religion*, Part I, Chapters I and II; Part II. The Abingdon Press, 1921.

Betts, George Herbert, *How to Teach Religion*, Chapters VII and VIII. The Abingdon Press, 1919.

Betts, George Herbert, *The Curriculum of Religious Education*. The Abingdon Press, 1924.

Burke, Agnes, and Others, *A Conduct Curriculum*, Introduction and Chapter II. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1923.

I. K. U. Committee, *The Kindergarten Curriculum*, Bulletin No. 16. Bureau of Education, Washington, D. C., 1919.

Rankin, Mary Everett, *A Course for Beginners in Religious Education*, Introduction, General Plan of the Course, and Topics for the Year. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1917.

PART III

EQUIPMENT

CHAPTER XX

THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The right physical environment is essential to the physical welfare of the child. His sensitive physical organism demands proper conditions of light, heat, ventilation, and sanitation. The best location in the church school, not the worst, should be set aside for him. He will suffer most because least able to resist, if conditions are poor. Since mental activity is more or less dependent upon bodily states, the physical environment exercises no little influence upon learning. The equipment in the room either limits the free expression of the child or stimulates it. Properly chosen it operates indirectly as a teaching agent and gives the teacher the opportunity to guide activity often without the child being conscious of any effort on her part to do so. If the decoration of the room, the choice and arrangement of furniture produce a beautiful environment, the æsthetic development of the child is furthered and the effect of the room serves to create a quiet, happy mood.

THE ROOM

Location.—To-day the room is the unit for the building. An east or south exposure is most desirable for little children, especially if the session is held in the morning. The building should be of fire-proof construction with at least two entrances

and with corridors ten to twelve feet wide. The kindergarten room should be on the first floor if possible.

Size and shape.—There should be at least fifteen square feet of floor space and two hundred cubic feet of air space for each pupil. If the room accommodates from thirty to fifty children at a session, it should be about thirty feet in length by twenty-five in width by thirteen feet in height. These dimensions suggest a room slightly longer than wide, a shape more attractive and more usable than the square.

Lighting.—The windows should approximate one fourth to one sixth of the floor space according to the degree of illumination available. If the room can have windows on the east or on the east and south, the arrangement will be highly desirable. The spaces between the windows should be the least possible to avoid shadows. The glass may be placed to within six inches of the ceiling, and the sills about two or two and a half feet from the floor. The windows may be as near as two feet to the corners of the room. Some modern kindergartens open on a cement porch having no roof and all windows are French doors, giving abundant light.

Heating and ventilation.—The temperature of the room should vary from about 65 degrees to 70. The most practical type of heat is probably the steam; it is essential to have a steady, dependable heat for small children particularly. There are many schemes for ventilation but none yet has entirely superseded the open window. However, the kindergarten teacher should be careful about drafts

in the room, especially when the children are seated on the floor. The air should be clean, and this is accomplished in some ventilating systems by washing it as it passes through the plant. It should have the proper amount of moisture, which, if not supplied by the ventilating system, may be in a measure provided by attachments for water on the radiators. Finally the air should be moving, not stagnant, and this, again, is taken care of by a good ventilating plant.

Sanitation.—The building itself should be provided with proper light, dry basement and should be so located that the ground on which it stands will be well drained and free from organic matter. There should be a special cloakroom and a separate toilet for the kindergarten children. Both the cloakroom and the toilet should be well lighted and ventilated. The toilet should properly connect with a separate ventilating system. The plumbing in the toilet, which should contain at least one low seat, and a bowl for washing hands, should be of the best and the room should be kept immaculately clean. A disinfectant should be used in cleansing the bowl and the seat. There should be a drinking fountain in the hall near the kindergarten room and the water supply should be free from impurities. The cloakroom and toilet should, of course, be thoroughly heated.

Floors and walls.—The most desirable floor is cement with a good grade of battleship linoleum glued upon it. Such a floor is warm, sanitary, and comparatively noiseless. If wood is used, it should be hard; maple and oak are best. A wall surface that can be washed is most sanitary but not so

attractive. A calcimine which is so inexpensive that the walls and ceiling may be redecorated once or twice a year gives a softer looking surface and is sufficiently clean in most localities. The junction of walls and floor, and of the walls and ceiling should be concave.

Cupboards and cloakroom.—There is need of cupboard space which the children can use and also a supply cupboard for the teachers and the secretary. The cupboard for the children should be a set of shelves built out from some convenient wall space where they will not be in the way as the children move freely about the room. The shelves should be about three and a half feet high, seven feet long, and one foot deep, and they may be divided into compartments of desirable size for different types of play and handwork materials. The children can reach to the top of these shelves and can reach in easily to the wall. A steel rod with rings can carry curtains which provide a better front for the shelves than doors. If the room, however, is used for other purposes during the week and the materials are likely to be taken out and lost, then doors that lock are essential. The teacher's supply cupboard may be in the cloakroom and should contain some drawers and a set of shelves.

The cloakroom may have rows of low hooks around the wall placed about a foot apart so that the children can hang up their own wraps. Clothespins marked with the child's name may be supplied for the rubbers which can thus be fastened together and placed below the wraps on the floor. If a shelf is placed just above the hooks, the children

can put hats or caps and gloves on it, and there will not be so many articles falling on the floor. If space is not available for a cloakroom, a clothes-rack may be made by a carpenter. It can have a solid wood base with supports on either end, a rod may extend across the top from end to end with a shelf slightly above it. There children may hang their coats on hangers from the rod and place their hats on the shelf and their rubbers below on the wood base. This rack is not particularly ornamental but it is much better looking and more efficient than chairs or table for the purpose. Not only does the failure to care properly for wraps give the room a disorderly appearance and soil and muss the wraps themselves, but it teaches the children carelessness; and the unhappiness due to loss of belongings often spoils the child's impression of the session and may prejudice him against the school.

FURNISHINGS

Furniture.—Chairs scientifically constructed like the Posture League or the Mosher, to give the right support for the back and a properly formed seat, should be purchased in two heights (ten and twelve inches) for the children, and an additional height for the teachers. Round tables are very satisfactory for the handwork; a light table which folds is handled by the American Seating Company. The tables should be in two heights. A table with drawers or a desk and chair should be provided for the secretary. There should be several comfortable chairs for parents who bring in new children and who visit from time to time.

Either a piano or a victrola is essential, and the instrument should be a good one with a sweet, clear tone rather than a brilliant one. There should be one small, low table or taboret, on which flowers and objects may be placed and which can be set beside the teacher or in front of her chair. A screen for pictures or a display board about eighteen square feet, made of cork or soft poplar covered with burlap, denim, felt, is a desirable addition. A large silk flag and small flags which the children may carry, should be part of the permanent equipment.

Play and handwork equipment.—There are several objects and materials which should be included in the play and handwork list, namely:

A sandtable, 6 x 3 x 12, zinc lined with lip to prevent spilling.

One set of Hennessey blocks.

One doll (a girl doll, a boy doll, and a baby doll are desirable if funds allow).

One doll cradle or bed.

Doll chair or chairs.

Sand toys (celluloid sheep, dog, donkey, horse, cows, ducks, turkey, chickens, etc.).

Noah's Ark (24 animals).

One small dust pan and brush.

One waste basket.

One dozen kindergarten scissors.

Clay as needed.

Paper—manilla, crêpe, tissue, construction, and folding.

Crayons, 24 boxes.

Paste.

Paste sticks (1 package).

Needles (1 package of blunt needles).
Thread (1 spool at least of coarse cotton).
Pins (2 papers).
One small watering can.
Vases (3 or 4 different shapes and sizes).
Books (music and picture).
Pictures.

Nature material.—In addition to the small nature materials which the teacher can gather and bring in without cost and which the children also may contribute, there should be a growing plant or fresh cut flowers every week. The teacher will have to depend upon gardens and florists for these, and she may be at some expense during the winter months to furnish them. It is not necessary, however, to have many flowers or rare ones; a single carnation, a few pansies, a spray of daisies will serve the purpose. Although it is not possible or desirable to keep pets at the church school, occasional pet visitors should be brought in—a canary, a pair of tame doves, a few baby chickens, a baby rabbit or some little kittens or puppies. If the janitor can furnish on these occasions a long box, too high for such small animals to climb out, and a pan for water or milk, the temporary needs will be met. On each occasion that a pet is brought in, the children should discuss in advance how they expect to treat it, and every child should agree to remain in his seat until invited to look at the pet more closely or to care for it. They must be held strictly to their promises or disaster may befall the pet.

The care of the room.—The room should be well cleaned after each session. The floor should be

washed each week and the windows often enough to keep them clear and shining. The furniture should be carefully dusted before the session. Rubbish, including handwork debris, story papers, old hymnals, and the like, should not be left to clutter shelves, tables, or the piano. The children should be taught to love and respect their room and everything in it and to do their share in keeping it in order. They should know the janitor and appreciate what he does for them.

DECORATION

Its value.—In his inspiring essay on "The Inner Beauty," Maurice Maeterlinck says: "Nothing of beauty dies without having purified something, nor can aught of beauty be lost. Let us not be afraid of sowing it along the road. It may remain there for weeks or years, but like the diamond it cannot dissolve, and finally there will pass by someone whom its glitter will attract; he will pick it up and go on his way rejoicing."[1] Our first schoolrooms were very unattractive and in many instances even ugly. One of our art teachers has well said that the greatest surface of the schoolroom is blackboard, actual black, while nature on the contrary paints her greatest spaces in greens, grays, or browns. A certain little child looking around the lovely room at her school with its childlike pictures, vases of flowers and gay leaves, said involuntarily, "Something pretty everywhere you look!" Indeed the children do appreciate beauty.

Principles.—In any room the darkest values

[1] From *The Inner Beauty*, by Maurice Maeterlinck. Reprinted by permission of Dodd, Mead & Company, publishers.

KINDERGARTEN ROOM WITH TABLES, BLOCKS AND SAND BOX

should be on the floor, the lightest should be on the ceiling, and the walls should be intermediate. Red, orange, yellow and brown—warm colors which speak to us of fire and sunlight—should be used in a room with little sunlight. Blue, green, purple, gray and white—cool colors that make us think of snow, shade and streams of water—are delightful in a very sunny room. The furnishings should be chosen to harmonize with something else in the room.

Application.—Because little children need sunshine and cheer in their rooms unless the climate is very warm and the room sunny, it is well to use a grayed orange or a sand color for the walls, cream or cream white for the ceiling, a brown linoleum for the floor, and brown or ivory woodwork. The chairs and tables should match the woodwork; if the windows are clear white glass, hangings of some sheer material may be used in yellows, browns, and reds. Vases in vivid yellow or orange or red pottery furnish delightful bits of color, and the flowers add their brilliance. If the windows have stained glass, then the hangings will not be needed; the glass should, however, follow the color scheme. The permanent pictures will supply some additional color and the gowns of the teachers and the dresses of the children will complete the picture.

If the cool color scheme is selected, then the walls may be a soft gray-green, very light, or ivory, the ceiling should be white, the woodwork ivory or gray, and the floor, green or gray. The hangings and vases will add color in purple, blue and rose with background of gray and green for hangings. There should not be too many pictures, vases or

other decorations. The room should appear simple and spacious, but inviting and homelike in the arrangement of furniture and equipment. It has been said that a perfect day is one in which we see something beautiful, hear something beautiful, and do something beautiful. Judged by this standard, the teacher should endeavor to make every church school session a perfect one for each little child.

For further discussion:

1. What constitutes a good site for the church school building?

2. Use the following outline in criticizing the Beginner room in your church school, placing a cross in the proper column as you mark each item. State under "remarks" your reasons.

Points	Superior	Good	Fair	Poor	Remarks
Location in bldg. . . .					
Lighting.					
Ventilation.					
Heat.					
Size.					
Floor.					
Walls and ceiling. . . .					
Cupboards.					
Cloak space.					
Toilet.					

3. Draw a simple floor plan of a satisfactory Beginner room, indicating directions, scale of dimensions, location

of windows, doors, cupboards, etc., placing of furniture and materials.

4. If five hundred dollars ($500) were given to you to equip a Beginners' Department for fifty children, with all the necessary furniture, furnishings, and materials, state on this form how you would expend the money.

Article	Cost per	Number	Total
Chairs.....			

5. A Beginners' Department in a church school in Texas wants advice on the decoration of its room. The exposure of the room is southeast, it is on the first floor of the building, it is an oblong in shape 22 feet by 33 feet, and has window space equal to one fourth of the floor area. Give full instructions with explanation.

For further reading:

Ayres, Williams and Wood, *Healthful Schools*. Houghton Mifflin Company, 1918.

Cook, William A., *Schoolhouse Sanitation*, Bulletin No. 21. Washington Government Printing Office, 1915.

Shaw, Edward R., *School Hygiene*, Chapters I to V. The Macmillan Company, 1913.

Terman, Lewis M., *The Hygiene of the School Child*, Chapters IX, X, and XIV. Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914.

The School Arts Magazine, January, 1921, Vol. XX, No. 5.

Addresses for supplies:[1]

The Abingdon Press (Church School Supplies), 150 Fifth Avenue, New York.

American Seating Company (Tables), 14 East Jackson Street, Chicago.

Milton Bradley (General), 23–29 Washington Place, New York; Springfield, Mass.; Chicago, Ill.; Kansas City, Mo.; San Francisco, Cal.

Dietz, William H. (Church School), 20 East Randolph Street, Chicago.

Educational Equipment Company. (Furniture), 70 Fifth Avenue, New York.

Educational Supply Company. (Book Shelves and Cabinets), Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

J. L. Hammett Company (General), Worcester, Mass.

Posture League Company (Chairs and Tables), 266 Fifth Avenue, New York.

Prang Company (Art Supplies), 118 East 25th Street, New York; 2001 Calumet Avenue, Chicago.

F. O. A. Schwarz (General), 32nd Street and Fifth Avenue, New York.

Scientific Seating Company (Chairs), 150 Chambers Street, New York.

Schoenhut Mfg. Company (Toys), Philadelphia, Pa.

[1] Street numbers subject to change.

PART IV

ADMINISTRATION

CHAPTER XXI

MANAGEMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT

One of the last steps to be taken in the organization of the Sunday school into departments was the creation of a Beginners' Department separate from the Primary Department. In many church schools children of kindergarten age, four to six years, are still meeting with the Primary children. How unfair this procedure is to the Beginner may be judged by a comparative study of the characteristics and needs of Kindergarten and Primary children. The mere fact that Primary boys and girls can read, or at least are beginning to do so, and that songs are copied on the board for them to read and printed material placed in their hands from time to time puts the Kindergarten child at a disadvantage. The degree of self-control expected of the Primary child is impossible for the Beginner. His inclusion in the Primary is distressing to him, difficult for the Primary superintendent, and disturbing to the Primary children.

If it is impossible to have a separate room for Beginners, a large screen may be used to divide the Primary room, and the Beginners may meet for their own session behind the screen. Of course this arrangement is far from satisfactory because there will necessarily be some distractions for each group. If, however, the Beginner superintendent prove the need for a separate room by her enthusi-

asm and fine work under the conditions, in time it will be forthcoming. One of the most spacious and well-equipped Beginner rooms in the country is the fourth step in the progression of a department originally included in the Primary. The second step was a tiny room used as a storage place and passageway from one department to another.

DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND TEACHERS

The superintendent.—The superintendent is the most important officer in the department, for she helps to select the other officers and teachers, organizes the work of the department, carries on the duties of administration, supervises the actual teaching, and teaches herself. She should be a trained worker with children, if possible a kindergartner, and she should possess qualities of leadership and be a good organizer. That she should be attractive to children and possess Christian character is of paramount importance.

The superintendent plans or selects the course of study with the help of her supervisory officers; she has charge of the general group procedure; she has supervision of the health of the children and of the arrangement and decoration of the room. She is responsible for meetings with her teachers and for contacts with the parents of the children. She oversees the records, assigns duties to the other members of the department, and helps to make the budget for supplies. She must formulate the objectives for the department and see that they are realized.

The secretary.—An efficient secretary is essential to the success of the department. If the young

woman who is chosen for this position has had some training in record keeping, typing, and filing in high school, it will be of great assistance. She should be accurate and should like the detail of secretarial work, and she must love little children and be patient with them. No one in the Beginners' Department should be nervous or irritable, because little children are very sensitive to atmosphere and one such person in the room seriously affects the group. The secretary enrolls new children, keeps the attendance and collection records, fills in reports for the church school office, types and sends out notices for the superintendent to the parents, takes care of telephone calls, and acts as librarian for the book and picture library and for the story papers.

The assistants.—For the assistant who plays the piano the qualifications and duties are stressed in the chapters on music and dramatization. She may or may not assist with the teaching. The other assistants should be trained or in training for teaching Beginners, and should possess personality attractive to children and Christian character. One of them should act as a substitute for the superintendent during any absence and should be given the opportunity to take charge of the whole group from time to time when the superintendent is present in order to receive her criticism and help. They should all have the direction of smaller handwork and expression groups following the story, each one being responsible for a group of six to ten children.

In a department of fifty, there should be therefore five or six assistants. Each one should be

given a certain number of children in whose homes to call and for whom she feels especial concern. One assistant should be made responsible for the light, ventilation, and heat in the room and in need should be able to get in touch with the janitor; another should take care of the door, welcoming children and visitors and seeing that they are rightly directed; a third may look after the order in the cloakroom and halls; a fourth assist the children who ask to go to the toilet or to get a drink, etc.; a fifth take care of the cupboards and the handwork materials both as to distribution and order after the lesson; and any others help the children to arrange the flowers and the superintendent to get the room ready, also to receive the children during the presession and to acquaint them with each other, the room, and the equipment. There will usually be three or four table groups looking at pictures, handling materials, or folding the story papers. If duties are not definitely assigned, every assistant rises when the door opens or materials are needed at the cupboards; or, sad to say, the opposite sometimes happens—no one heeds the need.

All of the assistants should cooperate in carrying out the objectives of the superintendent for the department; all of them should be sympathetic in attitude and should help with the records of individual child needs and with the health supervision. They should assist with the control in an unobtrusive way by touching gently as a reminder, the child who is restless, by putting the finger on the lips as a suggestion to the child who is talking while the story is being told, by moving the chair

to sit beside the new child who is becoming fearful.

They should not give directions aloud when the superintendent is in charge or make comments unless invited to do so; and they should take part in activities very quietly in order not to overshadow the child or force direction upon him. Teachers who shove and pull little children about have not learned the first principle of scientific or artistic teaching. The assistants should attend all conferences called by the superintendent and should accept criticism from her in an impersonal and professional spirit. The criticism must always be constructive, however, pointing out strong points as well as weak and showing the way to improvement. The superintendent will invite the other members of the department to meetings with the parents, and they should be deeply interested as a group in cooperating with the home.

THE RECORDS

Enrollment.—When a child enters the Beginners' Department he should have a card filled out for him by his parents which gives his full name, address, telephone, date of birth, date of enrollment, kindergarten which he attends, the name of parent, the church affiliation of parent. These cards should be filed in a box available for use at the church school. A duplicate set should be provided for the superintendent to work from at home. The kindergarten child cannot tell, of course, the necessary facts, and the card will have to be filled out by the parent at the church school or pinned on the child in an envelope carrying a little message to the

mother. This message should express interest in the child and pleasure in enrolling him and should explain the need of accurate information. More complete information about the child and the home is very desirable, but it can be secured by the teachers as they have opportunity to observe the child and to call in the home. The character of the information and the means of securing it were fully explained in the chapter on "Individual Differences." This information, however, should be filed in a card catalog and should be available only to the teachers.

Attendance.—The Kindergarten child is not responsible to the extent even of the Primary child, for punctual and regular attendance. He cannot tell time and he does not know days certainly unless informed by his parents. However, he does appreciate recognition for promptness and for regularity. A happy smile when he appears on time and the words, "Here is John. He is on time to-day," mean a great deal to him. A little clap for each child who is prompt, given after the school is assembled, words of pleasure the last Sunday in the month concerning the children who have been present every Sunday, will help; but the greatest assistance is to have the child enjoy each session from the first to the last activity so that he weeps when he misses any part of it.

The child will express himself quite fully at home, and father and mother will find it necessary to get up early and start him on time every Sunday. The little girl in a certain church school who was taken on a very delightful trip to have dinner with friends one Sunday and who missed the Beginner class,

surprised her parents into a new point of view when she said after they returned home, "Well, we've just wasted the day, missed my Sunday school and everything!"

The parents, however, need to be challenged by the teachers with the desirability of forming from the beginning habits of prompt and regular attendance. The secretary should keep the attendance record either on cards carrying the child's name and a space for marking attendance and collection each Sunday or in a book so marked. The attendance cards can also be kept in index file. The general office of the church school will probably have its own system of reports which the secretary must keep in addition, handing in the data for each Sunday either during or at the close of the session.

Promotions.—The promotions in the church school usually take place from the Beginners' into the Primary Department once a year, unless there should be some unusual reason for promoting an individual child at some other time. The secretary should furnish the church-school office and the secretary of the Primary Department with the names, the addresses, dates of birth, the term of enrollment in the Beginners' Department, and names of parents, of the children who are being promoted. Preceding the promotion date by three or four weeks, she should furnish the superintendent of the department with the list of names of children eligible to promotion.

GRADING OF CHILDREN

Within the department.—No child should be admitted to the Beginners' Department until he is

four years of age. If, however, there is a Cradle Roll Department in the church school which conducts a class for little children from two or three to four years of age, that class will promote once a year as do the other classes, and there may be children two or three months under four who for their own development should be promoted then rather than detained in the Cradle Roll class for another year.

Some church schools are using the mental tests, which, of course, afford a much more reliable standard of readiness for promotion than does chronological age. It is the child who is mentally four that the Beginners' Department would like to secure. The children who are four and five work well together, as a rule, in all of the activities of the session. It is not necessary and hardly practicable to divide the group except for the manual activity in connection with which each individual child has considerable opportunity for expression in speech and at times for dramatic play. It is well to have the new children work together, at least until they have gained some skill in the handling of tools and materials; and there is an advantage with some types of handwork in dividing the rest of the children on the basis of their skill, letting the slower children have a simpler project.

Any grading, however, within the department had best be very flexible. Beginners are timid when they attend only once a week; brothers and sisters or little friends are greatly comforted if they can be in the same group. A rainy or a stormy day makes decided inroads on the attendance so that some tables might have only one child and

others eight, an unfair situation for teachers and children which demands immediate adjustment. There should be therefore no permanent grouping but a constant revision from week to week. The assistant teachers may be given a certain number of children from the department for observation, home visiting and record keeping; but these children may work in various groups and will not belong to the teacher in the sense that a class does in the Primary or Junior Department.

Into the primary department.—It is customary once a year to promote the children who are six or will soon be six from the Beginners into the Primary Department. A better basis for promotion is to find out the children approaching six who will be in the primary grade in the secular school. A child who is entering the primary in school will resent as a rule being held back in the church school. There is too a desirability in correlating as closely as possible secular and church school education, using the skills and information which the child receives in school for the church school program whenever possible.

A child who is not strong enough or mentally not developed to the point where the primary grade can accept him in the secular school, is not ready for promotion in the church school. The mental test is very desirable for use in promoting from Kindergarten into Primary; it is the child who is mentally six, rather than chronologically so, who is best fitted to succeed in the first grade. There should also be a certain requirement for promotion within the department. Children should have attended the Beginners' Department with sufficient

regularity to have gained the fundamental information, attitudes, and habits called for by the objectives in the department. However, study in scientific measurement of little children has not yet progressed far enough for the superintendent to tell accurately the child's achievement, and kindergarten children have not progressed mentally to the point where examinations or tests on knowledge are practical or valuable. For the present it is necessary to use the age basis verified by the entrance into the primary grade in the public school, combined with a certain attendance requirement in the Beginners' Department.

TEACHERS' MEETINGS

Departmental.—The superintendent should hold a short conference with the secretary and teachers after each session, lasting not more than fifteen minutes. In this conference she may discuss any matters that need immediate attention, like a call or card to a home where there is illness or a new baby, the purchase of additional material for the next session, a meeting which the teachers should attend during the week. She may also speak of the significant happenings in the morning session, like a marked development noted in some child, a need revealed by some other child, an error made in teaching, or a success achieved—points which might be forgotten if even a few days intervened. She should also speak of the preparations for the next session and of changes in subject matter or activities advisable on the basis of what has just transpired. She should welcome questions, suggestions, and contributions from every member of the staff.

Cooperation is impossible unless teachers keep in constant touch. If any teacher needs some personal criticism or advice which cannot be given without embarrassment before the staff, she may be asked to remain after the others have gone or to see the superintendent some time during the week. Individual conferences on matters that concern the whole department are a waste of time, but they are of the greatest value when they give the individual help which concerns her work or personality alone.

In addition to the weekly conferences there should be a meeting of the staff once a month at which the course of study including aims, subject matter and activities, and technique in handling these, should be fully discussed for the sessions of the coming month. The results of the month just passed should be summed up and an inventory taken of the outstanding needs of the group as a whole and of the individuals in it; and ways and means discussed of meeting these in planning the course of study. The superintendent can make this the occasion for giving the help that she has seen her teachers need along any specific line, as, for example, control, music, handling a sand-table project. She should always make the meetings an occasion for inspiration to the teacher as well as information. A social chat at the close of the meeting, with or without a cup of tea, will not be wasted in deepening the bond that exists between the teacher and the department.

General meetings.—In many church schools there are cabinet meetings for the superintendent of the church school, the assistant and departmental

superintendents at which the policies of the school as a whole and of each department are discussed. The Beginner superintendent should always attend these meetings; she must remember that she cannot prepare her children for the Primary Department and the departments beyond if she does not fully appreciate what is being done in these departments. If she does not approve of some of the work, she will from time to time have the opportunity to state her opinion and to influence the others if she is right and tactful.

Besides the cabinet meetings there will undoubtedly be general meetings for all the officers and teachers of the school. These meetings will be for the purpose of setting forth and discussing those matters which concern every department in the school and not for consideration in any great detail of the work of any one department. The general meetings are to the success and morale of the school as a whole what the departmental meetings are to the one department. The superintendent should ask her teachers to attend as a group—attendance at such meetings should be a part of the requirement for teaching in the department.

Training classes.—While the training class cannot take the place of the departmental and general meetings, there should be in every community of churches an annual training school which gives untrained people who want to teach an opportunity to obtain the preparation, and which enables teachers and officers to continue their studies. One mark of a progressive school is the study that is constantly done by the members of the staff. The superintendent of the Beginners' Department

should set the example by enrolling for work in the training school and by securing the enrollment of her teachers. If the community does not maintain such a training school, the church should at least have a class for its young people who want to qualify for teaching in the church school, or the Board of Church Schools of the denomination may hold an annual institute near at hand to which teachers or prospective teachers may be sent.

Reading course.—If there is not a training school, the superintendent can secure in time a library for the teachers of her department or can get the interest of the local public library in buying some of the books, or possibly the teachers will be glad to purchase one book a year themselves and then exchange. It should be the endeavor of the superintendent to see that every teacher in the department reads at least one new book each year. The books suggested in the bibliography to *Beginner Method* afford a suggestive list. This plan of continuous education for the teachers of the church school will bear rich fruit in their personal development and in their helpfulness to the childhood of the church.

For further discussion:

1. What arguments would you use to convince a Sunday-school Board of the necessity for a separate Beginners' Department?

2. How many officers and teachers are needed to conduct a department of thirty children? of fifty children? What are their respective duties?

3. If you were superintendent of a department, how

would you help an assistant who interfered when you were reproving a child? One who put her hands on the children to guide them in the various activities? One who never saw details needing attention, such as a flapping shade or a child on too high a chair?

4. In enrolling can the Beginner teacher get the necessary information from the children? What is the best procedure?

5. What is the comparative difficulty in securing prompt and regular attendance on Sunday and at the week-day kindergarten? Explain.

6. Report on the record keeping in your church school. Is it satisfactory?

7. What is a sound basis for admitting children into the Beginners' Department and for promoting into the Primary? Is any grading necessary within the Beginners' Department?

8. Evaluate the various means for training teachers before they enter the department and after they are members.

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CHAPTER XXII

COOPERATION WITH THE HOME

If religion is interpreted as a way of living that demonstrates love for God on the one hand and love for neighbor on the other, if it means a social order in which God is the Father and all men are brothers, then it cannot be confined to any one place or to any one hour in the week. The development in this way of living must be continuous from the cradle to the grave. The foundations should be laid before the babe can creep while he still nestles at the mother's breast.

THE FUNCTION OF THE HOME IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Information.—The religious life develops from the early days when it is feeling only stirred by the face, the voice, the emotion of the mother, until it becomes gradually both knowing and feeling as the child understands language and questions, and the feeling and knowing find expression in communion with God and in the joy of serving. The home touches the whole life of the child more closely than any other place, and the mother especially has the privilege of being, if she is prepared, the supreme guide of this little one who embarks on the great quest of God-seeking.

The child alone with his mother or father asks out of his need questions which he seldom if ever asks in a group, questions so fundamental that they strike to the very heart of religious faith and

knowledge. He also reveals thoughts and longings that demand wise understanding and sympathy. Robert, of whom Mrs. Mumford writes, asked his mother what was the greatest thing God ever made and when she said a little baby, he disagreed with her because he thought that she should have said lightning. To this little lad the wonderful power of electricity appealed far more than the miracle of creation. Elizabeth remarked suddenly one morning, "Oh! I wish I had wings and I would fly away and find God. I would put my arms around him and never leave him." She needed to be led to an understanding of the love that can stretch across distances, and find gladness in doing the will of another.

The child is gaining a far more vital education from the reactions, the responses, the information which he gleans as the days come and go in the home situation than he can ever get in one or two hours a week in a church-school class, for the information is given as it is needed and immediate application is made. Whether the education is good or bad it goes on just the same and indelible impressions are made which time cannot efface.

Attitudes.—Attitudes and appreciations are not only created by the audible instruction of the home, but by the example of the parents—the conversation when the children are not supposed to be listening, the prayers, the attendance at church service, the revelation of emotions, and those inner prejudices which the parent may fondly think he is successfully concealing. "There are fathers and mothers who have never in their lives," says Dean Hodges, "preached to their children in the spoken

language of religion, whose good examples have been convincing and enduring sermons." There are fathers and mothers too whose criticism of the teacher and the minister, whose ridicule of other good people, whose despotic rule over the children, whose fondness for the material possessions of this world, and whose despair in trouble or sickness have belied all their smooth-spoken professions.

Habits.—Religion cannot be imposed upon the child. Habits cannot be effectively fastened on in the hour or two at the church school. The fundamental law of habit-formation is exercise, and no matter how well formed the habit it tends to disappear through disuse. From washing the ears to saying the prayers the neglect of habit means its loss. If we would have God part of the child's consciousness, then God will have to be a part of the home consciousness, and the habit of meeting him in prayer must be cultivated every day. The best that the teacher can do in the short time she is with the child is to develop those habits necessary to living together in the church school and give the information and inspire the desire that will motivate habits of moral and social living in the home and the community if parents cooperate in the difficult task of forming these habits. It is to the home that we must look mainly for the cultivation of habits of obedience, courtesy, consideration, helpfulness, and honesty, the backbone of a Christian civilization.

RELATION OF THE CHURCH SCHOOL TO THE HOME

Dependence on the home.—Not only does the church school need the cooperation of the parent

in habit formation and in deepening the impressions made in the story and song by repetition at home, but it is dependent upon the home for the mere presence of the child at the session. An unfriendly parent will keep the child away from all religious influence; an indifferent one will make him an irregular and tardy attendant. The teacher should therefore do all in her power to secure the cooperation of the friendly home and to reach the indifferent and hostile parent.

Need of the home for the help of the school. The home, on the other hand, needs the teacher. Not only can she help the father and mother to understand the purpose and program of the church school, but she can help them understand their own child. Frequently he is misunderstood at home; certain tendencies are puzzling, certain behavior irritating, and the teacher out of her wider experience and her deeper study may be able to shed light upon serious problems. The parents may need the encouragement of the teacher and find a distinct comfort in meeting someone else who shares with them responsibility for the child's moral and religious nurture. Through their own child they become interested in child study and education until the home is transformed into the right kind of an environment for developing religious life. Parents need to meet other parents of little children for the social and educational gain; such meetings the teacher can make possible.

Finally such a close relationship to the church school binds fathers and mothers more closely to the church and is often the first step in their own religious awakening. Peter, the four-year-old son

of a Slav family recently arrived in America, was brought to a certain Beginners' Department by a nursemaid. The father and mother had no religion of their own, although the grandparents had been Greek Catholics. Peter was delighted with the school; he repeated everything at home. The parents became so interested that first one and then the other would come to the church school. Meetings were held for parents, and both father and mother came. Finally they invited the minister of the church to baptize the children; soon they joined the church. The father has been for years one of the most earnest volunteer workers in a mission conducted by this church.

MEANS OF REACHING THE HOME

The call.—There are many ways of reaching the home, but the personal visit is by all means most valuable in enabling the teacher to know the mother, the child, and the conditions. Timid, sensitive William was never at ease with the teacher until she called at his home, saw his playroom with its engine and blackboard, fed his pet rabbits in the back yard, and sampled his favorite candy. After that they were comrades. The reason for Helen's defiance the teacher never understood until in visiting the home, she listened to Helen's mother talk for three minutes. "You may not know," she said, with Helen standing by, "what a bad girl Helen is. Her father and I can't do a thing with her. She is just as mean and sassy as she can be."

The superintendent should call at each home once a year if possible, and the assistant teachers should visit the children in their groups several times,

stopping to leave a remembrance for an ill child, a notice for a meeting, or some other informal evidence of interest and good will. The attitude of the caller should always be friendly and sympathetic, never critical or condescending. The utmost tact must be used in winning the confidence of the parents, and the conversation should be that of equals counseling together rather than that of a superior, the teacher, talking to an inferior, the mother.

No greater mistake can be made than to lecture to a mother on her besetting sins in managing her child. No matter how much she needs a scolding, it is likely to alienate her rather than to win her cooperation. If the plan of keeping a record on the home findings is followed, then the teacher will want to put down notes after her calls as to facts gleaned about the parents, the home conditions, the child's behavior there, his past illnesses and accidents, etc. She should never make notes while at the home and should not let the parents know that records of so personal a nature are kept.

In making calls there is sometimes a temptation to gossip a little, perhaps in a harmless way about other children or their parents. This practice may be exceedingly entertaining to the parent who is listening, but, if she is wise she will take due warning and give no confidential information to the teacher who so lacks the professional attitude. As the physician, the lawyer, and the minister are trained to guard the personal affairs of those who confide in them, so ought the teacher to refuse to talk about the children or the families with whom she has come in close contact.

The telephone.—A busy superintendent can reach the homes on her list more frequently if she has access to a telephone, although the telephone should not be substituted altogether for the visit in the home. One needs to see as well as to hear, and it is impossible to get the thorough understanding and the sympathetic relationship over the telephone that is possible in the personal call. However, questions requiring an answer can be more satisfactorily handled as a rule by telephoning than by writing. There is not the danger of postponement or neglect; and if the mother knows the teacher she enjoys the moment's chat with her.

The teacher must be careful to take little time on the telephone, for she cannot see the situation—the babe may be in the bath, or the cake in the oven, or the doorbell ringing, or a guest in the parlor. A serious conference about the child cannot be well handled when the teacher is unable to watch the mother's sensitive face; such conferences demand the talk face to face and the teacher should ask the mother to call upon her if she cannot arrange a visit to the home.

Letters to the parents.—It is very helpful in developing a common understanding of all the parents and the teacher to send to the home from time to time letters of explanation and direction on matters of general interest. The following letter was sent by one superintendent of Beginners at the opening of the new year in September.

Dear Friends:

From time to time during the year we hope to keep in touch with you through a letter which will let you know

what we are trying to do for your child on Sunday. We want him to have an opportunity to express in conduct during the week some of the lessons taught on Sunday, and this we cannot accomplish without your help.

We wish that you would let us know what he brings home in the way of information and impressions and what are your particular problems in his character-building. It is our aim to teach him to be more kind, helpful, and obedient as well as to know and to love the heavenly Father.

Our lessons for the ensuing month are on the home, what father and mother do for us and what we can do to help them; what God does for us especially in the preparation for winter—the shelter of the home and the harvest.

Any opportunities given the child at home to help in caring for baby, in dusting and washing dishes, in running errands will serve to carry out practically the ideal given at Sunday school. Ask the child to assist you when he is in the happy, loving mood and he will rarely refuse. The helpful habit once begun will tend to become permanent.

With any definite plan of development such as our own, it is important that every child come every Sunday, and that he be on time. We begin at 9:30. However, we want to safeguard the health of all the children in every way possible and so we ask that children who are unwell, who have been exposed to any contagion, or who have coughs and colds be kept at home. We are always glad to send the story paper and handwork materials to these children.

Hoping that we may work together for the Christian upbringing of all our children, I am

Sincerely yours,

.....

Superintendent, Beginners' Department.

Especially on occasions like Promotion Day, Thanksgiving, or Christmas the parents will need some information or with the best intentions in the world they may fail to cooperate. The same superintendent whose letter was quoted wrote the parents of her department in December as follows:

Dear Friends:

During the month of December our Beginners are told the story of the birth of the Christ-child and of the adoration of the shepherds and the angels. They are singing Luther's "Cradle Hymn" and one stanza of "Holy Night." The lovely pictures illustrating these stories are being mounted as Christmas gifts for mother and father, and we hope that you will be very much surprised and pleased when they are presented.

As is the custom in our Sunday school, we are remembering the little children of the Orphanage this Christmas time, for we know that the greatest joy of the season is the joy of giving, and we want the children to have a share in the real spirit of Christmas. A letter just received from the superintendent of the Orphanage says: "We believe that it would be better for you to send clothing this year; and mittens would be very nice, as we will need a goodly number of them to keep our little folks comfortable during the long, cold winter."

We would like, then, to have our children bring any outgrown clothing or a new pair of mittens next Sunday morning. We have a picture of the little children at the Orphanage which our children have seen; so they feel very much interested. We have discussed the gift at length.

The entire Sunday school expects to hold a very beautiful religious festival of song, story, and stereopticon pictures on next Sunday afternoon at four o'clock to which children and parents are urged to come. This

service is in addition to the regular morning session, when the children bring the clothing for the Orphanage.

Very cordially yours,

.....

Cards and papers to the children.—In addition to letters to the parents, cards and papers may be sent to absent children. It is very desirable to send either a picture illustrating the lesson story or an attractive postal card with a personal greeting from the superintendent to the child absent from the session. If the child is away two Sundays one of the teachers should call at the home. Parents and children deeply appreciate this attention. Some of the other occasions when either a card or a call can be effectively used are the entrance of a new child, the birth of a baby, an experience either of joy or sorrow in the home.

Classes for parents.—The organization of either a mother's or parent's class in connection with the church school taught by a parent properly trained or by the superintendent of the Beginners' Department if the class is held at an hour different from the children's session, has sometimes proved very successful. Meetings held in the afternoon of some week day for the mothers and teachers or evening meetings, when the fathers too may be invited, may be arranged.

These meetings can occur once a year or as much oftener as seems desirable. If there is to be only one gathering for the year, a program of music, a talk on the work of the department by the superintendent, and a social half hour offers the best plan. If the meetings are to be held in a series,

a list of vital topics or some book on child study may very profitably be used as a basis for discussion. Parents need help particularly on the health of the child, his mental, and moral-social needs, and his religious nurture. The child should always be the center of any such class or meeting.

It is well to have two of the assistant teachers conduct a creche for the children during the meetings, as many mothers cannot come without their little ones. One mother said to a superintendent of Beginners at the close of the last meeting of the year, "I was unacquainted in the church and I couldn't get out because of the baby; you have done so much for me, not only by the talks but by enabling me to know these other mothers." Another said, "I never go to church, but I will now, because I see what it means to the children;" while a third came joyfully to tell about a disobedient child; "I tried your suggestion with Mary and she is a different girl."

A child study club.—A group of parents in one church school became interested through the suggestion of the Cradle Roll and Beginner superintendents to organize a child study club. They adopted a constitution, elected a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer, and appointed committees on membership, program, literature, exhibits, and hospitality. They are now entering upon their fourth year with a thriving membership and a growing intelligence as to what they need and how to get it. The first year the superintendent of the Beginner Department gave a talk at each meeting; the second year a book on child study was used as a background for discussion; the third

year speakers alternated with members in presenting papers; and the fourth year a series of topics, a wide bibliography, and a combination of speakers and members furnish the program.

Service rendered by the parents.—The parents are often brought close to the church school by asking them to render some service there: cooperation in sending by the children food, toys or clothing for the poor; the furnishing of a rug, flowers or pictures for the room; assisting in receiving and caring for the guests at parties and entertainments; helping the teacher by home work with the child.

One Christmas a teacher sent word to the mothers that she would be glad to have the children sing their carols at home. One mother who was not well and could not come to see the teacher, called her on the telephone and asked her to sing one of the songs the tune of which was not familiar. Over the telephone the teacher sang to the mother, and the mother back to the teacher until every note was true. The following Sunday a certain little boy arrived at Sunday school with a radiant face and the information that he could sing "Long Ago On Christmas," all by himself.

Parents' day.—Occasionally it is well to have a special Parents' Day in the church school when all the parents are invited, as is the custom in many schools for the Christmas and Children's Day services or for the Christmas Party for mothers and children. However, parents should feel that every day is parents' day as far as the welcome is concerned. They may visit at any time, but they must not be permitted, of course, to whisper during the session or to interfere with the children.

Firmly but kindly and tactfully the teacher must insist upon quiet and the impersonal attitude.

After the session she should seek a conference with the visiting parent, at which time she should solicit questions and explain what were her objectives for the morning. As parents bring and call for their children in the department she has a great opportunity to make contacts with them every week and to give the little word of encouragement or appreciation about John or Elizabeth; telling of the new ability or the conquered fault or the point at which help is especially needed. Parents are not less glad than their children merely to shake hands with such a teacher.

Genuine interest.—These are some of the devices for bringing the home and the school together, but they will all fail unless the teacher has a genunie interest in the home, unless the people there feel that she is a true friend. A teacher called frequently in a home from which a little five-year-old girl came. She never talked personally to the mother about her religion but she did show a sympathy and understanding of the mother's problems that was very real. The baby in the home was taken ill and died suddenly. The mother sent for the teacher at once. When the teacher arrived the mother threw both arms about her and sobbed, "Oh! I knew that you would help me if anybody could." It is such confidence as this that every true teacher covets.

For further discussion:

1. Why is the home necessarily involved in any successful program of religious education?

2. Illustrate from an observation of a child in a home —the acquisition of information, the acceptance of attitudes, the forming of habits vital to the religious life that unconsciously take place there.

3. Would you say that the home and the church school are equally dependent, each upon the other, for success in the child's religious education?

4. In calling upon parents how would you meet criticisms of the child? of the church school? of the minister?

5. Write a form letter to the parents of children in the Beginners' Department for the purpose of soliciting their interest and cooperation in your plans for the Thanksgiving Festival.

6. What should be the teacher's attitude toward the parent?

7. Prepare a list of topics for a mothers' study class meeting once a month for the school year. Suggest references in connection with each topic and word the topics in such a way as to challenge the interest of mothers.

8. Suggest one service that the parents might render to the Beginners' Department in your church school.

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CHAPTER XXIII

CORRELATION WITH THE CHURCH SCHOOL

In the Sunday school of a generation ago old and young, beginners, high-school students and business men met in the same room at the same hour for a general assembly, which sometimes lasted the full period of the session and from which the various classes were dismissed to study and recite upon the lesson when part time was allowed for this purpose. The same subject matter was used for the five-year-old and his aged grandfather and the same lesson helps. There was unity in such a school at least in a superficial sense. Everybody had a chance to see everybody else, and to listen to the same message presented in the same way. They sang together, prayed together, and repeated Scripture together. A certain integration into a social group resulted. There were some fine friendships of older and younger people formed and an interest in and loyalty to the school as a school that was often very worthwhile.

The emergence of the department.—On the other hand, these gains were purchased at too high a price. Real unity demands common understanding, common purpose, common desires and ideals. The purposes, the ideals of the Junior boy and the middle-aged man are as far apart as their natures and needs, and no juggling of subject matter could

ever bring them together. The Beginner and the adolescent cannot have a common understanding or common desires because they are at different stages in their mental and emotional development. At each stage of growth different curricula and different technique in teaching will have to be employed if the demands of religious nurture are met.

The organization, therefore, into departments was a wise change, and the trend has been to seek constantly within the department to divide again into smaller groups the better to help the individual child. The department, however, has in some church schools become entirely isolated from other departments, so that the school consists of a series of separate units meeting at different hours apparently with little or no internal or external contact. The superintendents of the different departments meet casually at cabinet or teachers' meetings, but they have no interest in each other's work and no comprehension of its character. The teachers are less acquainted, and the children, the youth, and adults who attend practically never come in touch. There is no social bond running through the school, no particular loyalty to our school or pride in it.

THE NEED OF CORRELATION

Continuity of subject matter.—It is readily agreed that valuable as is departmental organization it is necessary also that the departments bear a definite relationship to each other so that they provide a continuity in education that parallels the continuous development in the life of the child. There are no abrupt transitions in natural growth and there should be none in the religious experience of

the child as he passes from department to department. There should be one great objective or purpose for the church school into which the smaller objectives for each department fit. Subject matter chosen for Beginners should be selected with the experiences of the home in mind and with the curriculum of the Primary Department in perspective so that the child would utilize the knowledge that he had gained in the past and would be prepared for the next step in his education. Ideally the superintendents of the various departments with the superintendent of the church school should form a committee to make the course of study which would meet the need of developing life from the Cradle Roll to the Adult Department and which would contain no unnecessary repetition and no omission of necessary material.

Continuity of habit formation.—There are certain habits which the kindergarten teacher seeks to form that should be stressed through the church school. It is a waste of time to emphasize habits of religious value one year or two years and then let them lapse until the child loses all that he has gained. It is never safe to assume with a child that new temptations, new problems, that arise in connection with growth will not interfere with habits that are formed or forming. Some of the habits which ought to persist are coming to the church school on time, or punctuality, regular attendance, prompt obedience, systematic giving, proper care of the books and materials, keeping hands off one's neighbor, alert attention, reverence in prayer and hymns, and the attitudes of cooperation, helpfulness, and responsibility.

SPECIFIC CONTACTS

The Cradle Roll Department.—The Cradle Roll Department, because it immediately precedes the Beginners' Department, should be in closest touch. The Cradle Roll and the Beginner superintendents have together the responsibility for the precious years from birth to six or seven, the foundation years in the physical, mental, moral, and social development of the child. It is their common problem to bind the home to the church school and to give the parents help in understanding and meeting the needs of their children, especially the religious needs.

It is very practicable, therefore, to have joint meetings of parents for the two departments and to entertain the Cradle Roll and Beginner mothers with their children at one or more simple parties each year. If two rooms are available, one can be fitted up with play toys for the young children who cannot take part in organized rhythms or games and who do not yet listen to stories or sing, and the other can be used for the games, stories, and songs. Very simple refreshments like vanilla ice cream and sweet wafers can be served to all. The mothers love to watch their children or play with them on these occasions, and should be privileged to stay in either room. The more touch that the mother of the young child has with the Beginner superintendent the more likely she will be to send her child to the Beginners' Department as soon as he is old enough to attend.

If the Cradle Roll superintendent has a class for three-year-olds, she will need to consult upon the

program of activities with the Beginner superintendent in order that there may not be serious overlapping in the choice of subject matter. It is very difficult to find simple enough stories, songs, and manual work for these little children, and many Cradle Roll superintendents choose material far better adapted to Beginners.

When Cradle Roll children are promoted from such a class into the Beginners' Department they may be escorted to a half circle of chairs within the Beginner circle, upon the backs of which the children have tied tissue paper ribbons or some other simple decoration in honor of their coming. The kindergarten children may sing for them and perhaps they will respond with one or two of their songs and a few rhythms. They should not be urged to do this if they are at all fearful. A picture illustrating some one of the Bible stories which they have been told in the Cradle Roll class may adorn the promotion certificate. If children have not had the experience in the Cradle Roll class, the first experience in the Beginners' Department will be more difficult and they will not be able to sing or to contribute as a group to the promotion service. The Beginner teacher will need to guard carefully the amount of attention which she bestows on the individual child, lest it prove to be too much for a sensitive nature.

The Primary Department.—The other close contact on the part of the Beginner superintendent is with the Primary superintendent and her department. It will give both departments much pleasure if they can occasionally meet together for a special service like that of Thanksgiving or Easter. Chil-

dren from the same families are in both departments. The children who have been in the Beginners' Department get much joy from coming back to the room and the teachers they have loved, and the little children in the Beginners' room feel very important and curious when they go in to visit their big brothers and sisters.

The interest of each department in the other may furnish a motive for service that is rendered with keen delight. One Primary Department made a vase for the Beginners' Department and filled it with flowers from their gardens. Then they came into the Beginner room with their gift and sang after they had presented it, "All Things Bright and Beautiful." On another occasion the kindergarten children sent some tiny chickens that had been brought to see them into the Primary room for the Primary children to enjoy. Such experiences help to prepare the kindergarten child for promotion so that he makes the transition happily and without undue strain. It is hard for the teacher to send on the children who have grown dear to her, but she will do so far more easily if she knows the teachers well in the Primary Department, and is satisfied that what she has achieved will be recognized, appreciated and utilized.

Promotion Day should pass without a cloud. The children should have been led to anticipate it for three or four weeks before its arrival; it marks a new stage of growth and should be an occasion for rejoicing on the part of child, parent, and Beginner superintendent. The simple exercises had better be conducted by the Beginner superintendent in the Primary room. The children who are not

promoted may have their regular session in the Beginner room at the same time with one of the assistant teachers in charge. They need know very little about the promotion, because they will not be able to understand why some children are receiving certificates and they do not. The service may therefore create discontentment and unhappiness if the separation of the group is at all emphasized. The promotion program should be brief and should not be the subject of drill. The teacher should plan it herself carefully that it may show something of what the children have achieved in the Beginner room and yet be a spontaneous expression on their part. It may include the following features:

1. A song of greeting may be sung by the Primary Department as the kindergarten children enter the room.

2. A response may be given by the Beginners' Department either in their own familiar greeting song or by waving the hand at the Primary children whom they know or by shaking hands with children whom they are especially well acquainted with.

3. A few words by the Beginner superintendent may state that these children have been in her room for two years and are now going to the public school primary and are big enough and strong enough to be Primary children in the church school too.

4. The Beginner superintendent may then ask the children to choose songs to sing for the Primary, and may use the song as a basis for a few questions that will show the knowledge which every child possesses about God's good gifts and his relation to God and God's world.

5. A prayer may follow asking God to care for the children and to aid them to learn more about him and to be very helpful in the Primary room.

6. Then the promotion certificates with a familiar picture and the signatures of the pastor, the superintendent of the church school and the Beginner superintendent may be given out, with an appropriate explanation of their meaning.

7. The Primary superintendent can now take charge and presently the Beginner superintendent slips quietly back to her own room.

This plan or a similar one may be varied indefinitely to utilize the material familiar to each individual department. A story could be told by one of the children or verses repeated by different children or by the group. Any good suggestions made by the children should be accepted by the superintendent, even though she change her plan decidedly to incorporate them. Before the kindergarten children enter the Primary room, the Primary superintendent should talk over the purpose of their coming, arouse the sympathy and interest of the Primary group, and elicit their promise not to laugh or in any other way embarrass the younger children.

Services for special days.—It is very desirable that once or twice a year the entire school unite in a religious festival or pageant in which all the children can participate. Christmas is an especially appropriate time, for the theme has compelling interest for all ages. Even the kindergarten children may have a part, singing one or two of their carols and hymns, marching in the processional and possibly taking a very simple pose in a tableau if a series of nativity pictures are used.

The festival should be given during the day or at a very early evening hour because of the little children. The idea of the festival should be explained to them in story fashion by the teacher, so that they will really understand it, and great care should be taken that they are not cheered or rendered self-conscious by special attention given in any way. The whole school should cooperate unselfishly to produce something of beauty, the most lovely story in the world, for each other and their parents and friends to enjoy. The warmth of feeling in the school, the appreciation of the parents, the growth in self-expression in many of the children, and the grip of the story upon their lives because of this dramatic use, can scarcely be estimated.

THE WEEK-DAY KINDERGARTEN

Many church schools are now maintaining a week-day session of all the departments of the school including the Beginners, while some churches are providing a week-day kindergarten only and are making such a kindergarten the nucleus for their religious education program in the community. Where there is either one or more week-day meetings of the Beginners' Department or where there is a kindergarten every day except Saturday, the Sunday plan should correlate with the week-day plan, and to this end it is desirable that the same person direct both. Without unnecessary repetition of material there should be utilization of valuable common experience in the two programs, stress upon certain essential habits and attitudes, and the religious emphasis in the

treatment of subject matter and the handling of social situations.

The Sunday program necessarily excludes some types of activity present on week days, such as washing doll clothes, taking excursions to the shops, baking cookies, and playing rollicking games, not because such activities are inherently wrong for the child on the Sabbath day, but because the Christian custom should be respected in keeping the seventh day as a different day and in putting aside the appearance of the workaday world for another set of activities including more worship and more quiet play. The Sunday program may well include, therefore, more Bible stories, more hymns, and more prayer in proportion to other subject matter, although the week-day kindergarten should not omit the use of these materials. There will probably not be a collection of money every day, but on Sunday this form of giving will be stressed.

Inasmuch as the week-day kindergarten will undoubtedly have a longer period—two hours and a half in comparison with the hour and a half of the Sunday session—more time can be devoted to each activity in the schedule. A greater variety of materials should be introduced and emphasis must be placed directly on the acquisition of health habits, skill of hands and body, and certain valuable mental habits which must be minor objectives where only a Sunday session is held. The *Beginners Book in Religion*, Abingdon Week Day Series; the *Kindergarten Curriculum Bulletin*, No. 16, 1919, Bureau of Education, Washington, D. C.; *A Conduct Curriculum*, by Agnes Burke and Others, Charles Scribner's Sons; and *Spontaneous and*

Supervised Play, by Alice Corbin Sies, The Macmillan Company, will be especially helpful in planning the week-day program.

The child will often spontaneously express in the week impressions that he has gained at the Sunday service and on Sunday his experiences during the week. Life is a whole, and no part of experience can be segregated and pigeonholed in one compartment. If such a procedure could succeed, it would be most undesirable in religious training, since religion is a mode of living that should command the whole of life and include all activity.

For further discussion:

1. Discuss the strength and the weakness of the departmental organization.
2. Make a list of the habits that you think should be emphasized throughout the church school. Check those that are consistently stressed in every department of your school.
3. Compare the lesson courses for the Beginners' and Primary Departments in your church school and point out any unnecessary overlapping or repetition of subject matter.
4. Suggest a plan of activities for a Cradle Roll class of three-year-olds which does not anticipate too much the work of the Beginners' Department, but which does prepare the little child for it.
5. How may the transition of the child from the Beginners' to the Primary Department be most happily made?
6. Plan in detail a promotion day program for the children in your Beginners' Department.
7. What caution must the adults in the church take to

heart if the children are to engage safely in public performances?

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PART V

THE TEACHER

CHAPTER XXIV

THE TEACHER

Compared to the teacher in importance, courses of study, methods of handling material, equipment and administrative device, dwindle into relative insignificance. The most entertaining subject matter rattles like dry bones when presented by a cynical, austere teacher. The best of methods fails when used by an incompetent teacher. In the most lovely of rooms where sunlight, plants, pets, and attractive decoration combine to make a child garden, an arbitrary teacher casts such a shadow that there is no trace of joyous growth. Was it not Emerson who said that he cared little for the name of the school which his daughter attended but much about the teachers with whom she studied?

Special training.—In selecting a teacher for Beginners one of the first questions to challenge is, "What training ought she to have?" The superintendent of a Beginners' Department should have in addition to a high-school education two years of kindergarten training, and one thorough course in methods of religious education; and, although not equally necessary, it is desirable that one or more of the assistant teachers have the same training. There is no phase of education that takes more skill than to teach a Kindergarten child religion. If it is required that the teacher of four- and five-year-old children in the public school hold a kinder-

garten diploma, the standard ought not to be less high for the church school.

However, if in the community a kindergartner is not available, then it should be the aim to secure a teacher who has had at least the equivalent of one summer term of specialized training; and in the meantime to work toward the higher standard. One cannot have too much training either before teaching or as a continuous stimulus during the teacher career. Objectives, subject matter, technique, equipment are constantly changing; and the teacher who does not study constantly finds herself very soon criticized as "old fashioned," out of step with progress.

Experience.—All training is a preparation for teaching, but no teacher ever learned to teach without experience. One cannot learn to dive by going through the motions on land or to cook by reading recipes out of a book or to teach by studying psychology and pedagogy. Much as all of these preliminaries may help, it is seldom that any teacher attains her maximum efficiency until she has taught several years. Experience is necessary to give maturity of judgment, confidence, readiness of response, and the background for creative work of the highest order.

Health and physical fitness.—Since the health of the little child is a matter of grave concern, and since he is extremely sensitive to the children's contagions and to any communicable disease, it is very essential that his teacher be free from infectious disease. A serious defect of vision or hearing is also more of a limitation in teaching the little child than the older child or adult, for the little child is

very impulsive and very imitative; he needs a teacher who can know what is happening at all times. A speech defect is promptly imitated during these formative years and may handicap the child seriously later. Prospective teachers who have such defects in speech should overcome them or give up the teaching of the little child. Much vitality is required of the teacher who follows the play way; constant adjustment and readjustment are required as she responds to this quickly moving being with his constantly shifting attention. Moreover, the teacher who seriously lacks vitality cannot radiate the happiness that little children need. One who deeply desires to be a teacher of children must order life accordingly and so control diet, sleep, and recreation that she will be fit for work.

Qualities of personality.—Teachers have possessed excellent training, experience, and health and yet have failed of the fullest measure of success. It is the teacher's personality that in the last analysis is of supreme moment. "It is," says George Herbert Betts, "as if the teacher's mind and spirit were the stained glass through which the sunlight must fall; all that passes through a living personality takes its tone and quality from this contact."[1] What are the essentials of a personality that possesses such magic potency over child life?

Good cheer.—The teacher, especially the teacher of little children, needs to be friendly. The average child of kindergarten age is shy and somewhat timid. The diffident, reserved individual does not secure a response from him. A cheerful teacher,

[1] *How to Teach Religion*, by George Herbert Betts. Reprinted by permission of The Abingdon Press, publishers.

one who is never cross or sad in the presence of the children, unconsciously radiates the happy atmosphere so necessary for the physical and mental health of the children. "I like my teacher," said a certain little girl, "she has such a smiley face." Of all teachers the church-school teacher most needs an inner joy which finds expression in her face and voice, for it depends largely upon the impression that she creates whether or not the church will seem an attractive, happy place.

Sympathy and self-control.—Sympathy which Palmer calls vicariousness, is a requisite. It is the ability to understand another and to feel for him. Little children are peculiarly sensitive to its presence or its absence. Without hesitancy they will approach the sympathetic observer with the most vital concern of their lives, and they are seldom disappointed in his response. The inner control which evidences itself in a quiet but forceful manner and in a low, clear voice is needed in the control of little children emotional, sensitive, and inclined to be nervous. The teacher who lacks poise generally has a disorderly, excited group of children who are unable to work and play quietly and with concentration.

Persistence.—The teacher who helps little children to form habits must be persistent. She dare not be tardy or absent if she wishes to succeed, for the price is "eternal vigilance." She needs to be patient, however, as well as persistent. It takes a long time often to master the secret of a single bad habit and to eradicate it "root and branch." Margaret Slattery says, "We teach and impatiently cry for results. God teaches and with majestic patience waits through the years for the lesson to be learned."

Integrity of character.—Another essential is a keen sense of justice which renders favoritism impossible, and fair play a law in the group, for the child at this period is forming his standards of conduct, and he feels morality long before he can consciously analyze it. For this reason there should be the honesty which precludes an untrue or evasive answer and which spurns dishonest motive. Deceitfulness in any form is dangerous and is almost certain to be imitated by this unmoral little child.

The making of personality.—These are the essentials together with a childlike imagination and the spirit of play; a sense of humor; and a keen appreciation of the beautiful in nature, art, and human character, the mirror through which the child sees beauty. Fortunately, personalities are not born but made in the strain and stress of living, else few would be called to be teachers of children.

Religious experience.—No matter what qualities of personality the teacher possesses, if she lacks a deepening religious experience, if she has no sense of the presence of God, no habit of daily communion with him, she is not qualified to teach in the church school. If her faith is not equalled by her love for God and her fellows, if she does not live this love in a life of service, then she is not fitted to lead little children into the kingdom of heaven, where God is the Father and all men are brothers. There is no substitute for a vital personal religion. It is the supreme requirement now as it was long ago when Jesus taught in Galilee.

For further discussion:

1. Do you agree with the statement that the teacher is the most important factor in the school? Justify your opinion by illustrations from your own experience.

2. Cubberley on the scale of a possible 100 points suggests that the following distribution be made in rating applicants for public school teaching:

Professional preparation	0 to 25
Evidence of previous success in teaching	0 to 40
Personality and adaptability	0 to 25
Physical examination	0 to 10

Would you change this rating for church-school teachers? If so, tell how you would vary it.

3. Why is the health and physical fitness of the Beginner teacher of especial concern?

4. To what extent do you as a teacher of children possess the following qualities? Mark yourself on each quality upon the scale of 0 to 10, keeping your ideal teacher in mind.

Friendliness	Force	Sincerity
Good Cheer	Quiet	Justice
Sympathy	Persistence	Play Spirit
Poise	Patience	Sense of Humor

5. Is there any essential requirement for the Beginner teacher in the church school which might be omitted for the kindergartner in the week-day school?

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